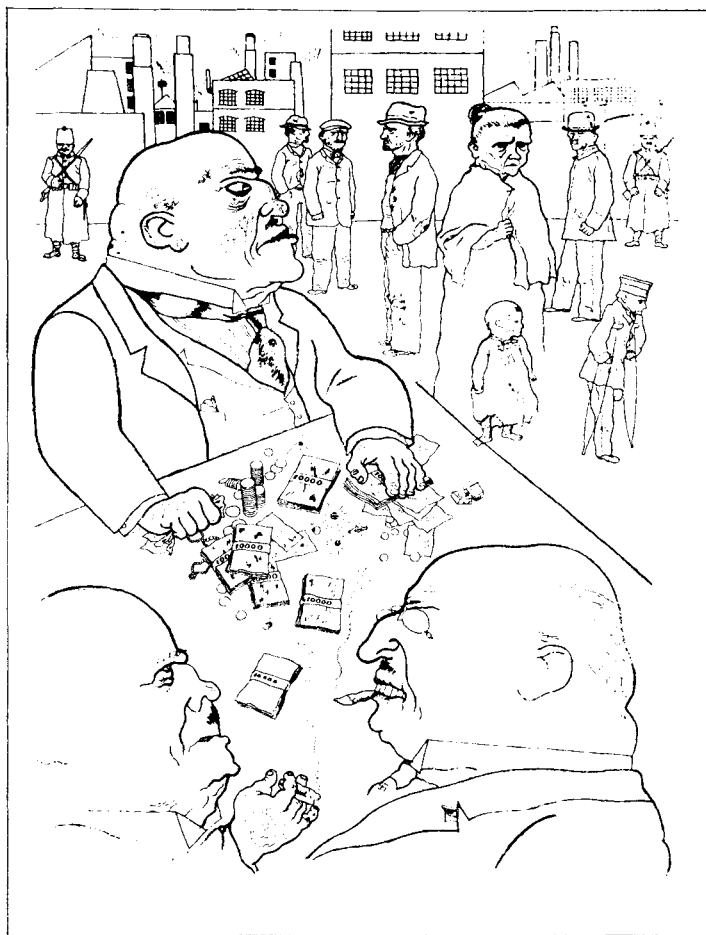


Marxism Today

Theoretical and Discussion Journal of the Communist Party February 1975 25 pence

Editorial Comments

Ray Watkinson A Study of George Grosz



George Grosz: Toads of Property, 1921

George Matthews

The Wilson Government and Britain's Crisis

Georges Marchais

Report to the Twenty-First Congress of the French
Communist Party — Part II

Maurice Dobb

Further Comments on Inflation

Judy Bloomfield

Trends in Youth Culture

Marxism Today

Theoretical and Discussion Journal of the Communist Party

Volume 19, Number 2

Editor James Klugmann

Editorial Board

Irene Brennan/Gabriel Carritt/Tony Chater
Jack Cohen/Maurice Cornforth/Maurice Dobb
John Foster/John Gollan/Arnold Kettle
John Mahon/Betty Matthews/Allan Morton
Bert Pearce/Mike Seifert/George Wake
Nick Wright

Editorial Correspondence

James Klugmann, 16 King Street,
WC2E 8HY

Advertisements

Doris Allison, above address

Orders and Subscriptions

Usual Agents or Central Books Ltd.,
37 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8PS

Subscription Rates £3.75 per annum

CONTENTS

	Editorial Comments	33
George Matthews	The Wilson Government and Britain's Crisis	35
Georges Marchais	Report to the Twenty-First Congress of the French Communist Party Part II	47
Discussion on Inflation: Maurice Dobb	Further Comment on Inflation	55
Review Article: Ray Watkinson	A Study of George Grosz	57
Discussion: Judy Bloomfield	Trends in Youth Culture	61

The front cover was designed by Pat Cook and the George Grosz photographs supplied by *Studio Vista*.

SOME ARTICLES PLANNED FOR MARCH-MAY ISSUES

E. A. Bitsakis	Relativism and Relativity
Donald Cameron	Problems of Heredity
Bill Carr	Memories of the General Strike
Frank Chane	Systems Thinking
Ruth & Edmund Frow	The First International and the Manchester Working Class
Steve Iliffe	Health Care and the Medical Profession
Martin Jacques	Trends in Youth Culture: Reply to Discussion
James Klugmann	Strategy of the Democratic Anti-Monopoly Revolution
Peter Latham	Relations between Marxist and non-Marxist Sociology
Jack Lindsay	The Role of the Individual in Art
Georgio Napolitano	Party, Working Class and Intellectuals
Mike Prior	More on Inflation
Barrie Stacey	The Marxist View of Human Nature
Ray Volleamere	Karl Marx: Activity and Alienation

Editorial Comments

THE publication last month of the first volume of the collected works of Marx and Engels¹, was the product of the collective work of Lawrence & Wishart in Britain, International Publishers, New York, and Progress Publishers in Moscow, with the aid of the Soviet Institute of Marxism-Leninism. The plan was jointly agreed by the Communist Parties of the three countries concerned. Much help was given, too, by the Institute of Marxism-Leninism of the German Democratic Republic.

Now we can study in English (most of this volume is translated for the first time) Marx's writings from the age of 17 to 25, his early correspondence, his Doctoral Dissertation on classical materialist philosophy (with the research work that preceded it), his poetical and other literary works and his political articles, including all of those that he produced as contributor to and editor of the *Rheinische Zeitung*.

We thus have available for study all the material that enables us to see the *first steps* in what Lenin called "Marx's transition from idealism to materialism and from revolutionary democracy to communism".

We can follow his boyhood thoughts, his student studies of law and philosophy, the influence of his examination of early classical materialism. We can observe the great influence of Hegel and how Marx begins to pass beyond the Hegelian approaches.

We can see how his years of life as a fighting political journalist helped him to begin to understand how society is based on contending political groups with different interests, how the ruling groups of society subordinate the state and law to their interests, how he begins to turn to the defence of the poor, the people, begins to see the need for the study of political economy.

The struggle against religious ideas, he comes to see, should be fought out in the context of politics rather than the problems of politics fought out in the field of religion. An alliance is needed, he concludes, between politics and philosophy.

The publication of the *Marx-Engels Collected Works* is a really important contribution

to the development of Marxist-Leninist theory in Britain.

The second volume—Engel's early works—is due in the early spring, with volumes 3 and 4 later this year.

We recommend our readers to buy and study this first (and succeeding) volumes, and to do all they can to make them known in this country.

IDEOLOGY AND POST-SCHOOL EDUCATION

There were individual Marxists and small Marxist groups working in the British Universities in the 1920s (and even before). But it was in the early 1930s that the influence of Marxism began to be extended in colleges and Universities, that Marxist students began to be well organised and to play an important part in the development of a mass progressive student movement.

Questions of the fight against war and fascism were very central to the student movement of the thirties vintage, questions of fight against unemployment, misemployment, and support for the struggles of the unemployed like the Hunger Marchers.

Another important factor was the growing awareness of the deep crisis of the superstructure of capitalism—its values, morals, religious and philosophical ideas, in every aspect of its outlook, attitudes and institutions. Rebellion against this or that aspect of the capitalist superstructure was often a point of departure, a starting point of young intellectuals on the road to Marxism and membership of the Communist Party. Contact with the working class movement, struggle by its side, growing appreciation of its role, experience of practical struggle in the student or general political field, made the first rebellions deeper and more real, and helped to turn rebels into revolutionaries.

Alongside the critique of bourgeois ideology in general the more specific examination began to be developed of the contents of the curriculum. "Counter-teaching" was born. The application of Marxism in different fields and disciplines began to be studied in a more specialised way. The gauntlet was thrown down.

The Marxist challenge was made in political economy, history, aesthetics, literature, the

¹ Marx and Engels, Collected Works in English, Volume I, Marx: 1835-43. Lawrence and Wishart, 806 pp. £3.00.

philosophy and social role of science, even in the classics. The works of Marxists like Maurice Dobb, Dona Torr, A. L. Morton, Christopher Hill, Eric Hobsbawm, John Saville, George Rude, Edward Thompson, David Guest, Maurice Cornforth, Klingender, Caudwell, Kettle, George Thomson, Bernal, J. B. S. Haldane, Hyman Levy, Brian Simon—it is really invidious to try and list the names—began to be published.

Now 40 years later, the world has much changed. Eyes cannot be shut to the influence of Marxism-Leninism. Indeed, in their characteristic way, the British ruling class, con-

sciously and unconsciously, forced to "accept" (in a sense) what it can no longer totally exclude, is trying to absorb, embrace, and even to invite to enter the holy precincts of the syllabus, a sort of Marxism, which as far as possible should be academic, emasculated, domesticated.

The College and University education of a capitalist system in deep crisis is still trying to spread in a thousand forms the outlook and assumptions of "the system" and, in this way, its acceptance. But the use by the ruling class of education to spread its ruling class

(Concluded on page 64)

DEATH OF RAJI

Just as we go to press we hear with sadness of the death of R. Palme Dutt, who contributed so much to so many facets of the work of the Communist Party. Raji, said John Gollan, at the funeral on December 29, was "a formidable theoretical and political force who meant so much for the Party and the movement".

He was a foundation member of the Party. For more than 40 years he was a member of its Executive Committee. He was Editor of the *Labour Monthly* from its establishment in 1921 until his death. There are few aspects of political theory to which he did not turn his attention. A whole generation studied the nature and danger of fascism and the conditions under which it advanced in Italy and Germany from his *Fascism and Social Revolution* (1934). His books on the history of the international working class movement were translated into many languages.

If it is possible to point to one outstanding contribution of Palme Dutt to the British, and indeed to the world revolutionary movement, it is his work on the nature and role of the national liberation struggle, on the struggles and tasks of the revolutionary movement in the colonial and semi-colonial countries, and, perhaps first of all, in India.

Many thousands of people in many countries and in many languages studied his *India Today, 1940* (with his *India Today and Tomorrow, 1956*) and the successive editions of *The Crisis of*

Britain and the British Empire.

Raji tried, throughout his political life, to explain to the British working class movement its weaknesses with regard to its attitude to the peoples of the British Empire. He criticised, for instance, the shortcomings of men like Blatchford and Hyndman in this respect. He tried to demonstrate not only these weaknesses but also the reasons for them, and their roots in British imperialism. He saw as one of the most dangerous aspects of British reformism its defence of Empire in theory and in practice.

Above all he pointed out to the British workers, what Marx and Engels had always sought to do, that a people which oppresses others cannot itself be free. The fight of the British workers and their allies for a socialist Britain, he would always say, was a *common struggle* with the anti-imperialist struggle of the peoples oppressed by imperialism all over the world, in the first place, British imperialism.

All his political life he fought to make this not only an accepted theoretical concept but, through the solidarity struggle, a practical reality of daily life.

In his last years Raji suffered deeply from physical pain and discomfort, but like so many Marxists found strength to resist implacably the ravages of ill-health by continuing to the end his political work.

He was writing the February *Notes of the Month* a few days before he died.

The Wilson Government and Britain's Crisis

George Matthews

It was a great day for the left yesterday as Mr. Wilson quick-marched the government towards a Socialist Britain of State takeovers and a continued wage free-for-all.

Anthony Shrimley, *Daily Mail*,
October 30, 1974

In all, however, the Queen's Speech certainly sticks to the priorities which were in the election manifesto and before that in "Programme for Britain". It is a good augury for the future of the Labour government.

Tribune, November 1, 1974

The Government's programme for the first sessions of the new Parliament, as delineated on Tuesday, is less sweeping than might have been foreseen. To represent it as a surrender to "Bennery" is absurd... Indeed, by Labour's traditional lights there is nothing unreasonable in the Queen's Speech. To call it a victory for the extremists of the left is to misrepresent the great central body of the Labour movement.

George Hutchinson, *The Times*,
November 2, 1974

The proposals in the Queen's Speech on the economy do not get to the root of the crisis, Communist Party General Secretary John Gollan said last night. "They are a rehash of policies—wage restraint in the guise of the social contract, and the mixed economy—which have failed in the past and will fail again," he declared.

Morning Star, October 30, 1974

Four different estimates of the government's policy. Which is correct? For the left forces, the answer is of key importance, since it will determine their attitude to the government and their tactics and strategy.

Is the government carrying out a radical, even Socialist, policy as some of the Tory propagandists claim? If not, has it at any rate got its priorities right, so that *Tribune's* optimism is justified? Is *The Times* writer nearer the mark in saying that the government is acting according to Labour's "traditional (i.e. right-wing) lights"? Is the sharpness of the Communist assessment and criticism really justified at so early a stage in the government's life?

It goes without saying that all on the left, including the Communists, want the Labour government to succeed. But it is just because previous Labour governments have not succeeded that the closest critical scrutiny of the policy of this one is necessary.

The Crucial Question

On December 12, 1974, Foreign Secretary James Callaghan told the NATO foreign ministers in Brussels that the economic crisis facing the capitalist world "will be worse than the Thirties" if no way is found to tackle it.

As at the beginning of the great slump of the pre-war years, Britain faces this grim prospect with a Labour government in office.

It would be foolish to attempt to draw exact historical parallels. The crisis today expresses itself in different forms, the balance of forces in the world has changed, the position of capitalist countries relative to each other is different, and the working-class movement is stronger.

But the crucial question before Britain's Labour movement is the same today as in 1929.

Will the Labour government recognise that because the crisis is the crisis of the capitalist system, the way to tackle it is to reverse the capitalist policies which have caused and aggravated it, to seize the opportunity to weaken the grip of the big monopolists, and to prepare the way for Socialist advance?

Or will it adopt the traditional attitude of right-wing Social Democracy when confronted with capitalist crisis, and see its role as that of rescuing capitalism, of trying to ensure "class peace", and of working with big business and the City of London to ensure that whatever else suffers during the crisis, company profits do not?

Every Labour government so far, whether it has had a minority of seats in the Commons or a large majority, has pursued the second course of action. The result has been the frustration and disillusionment of Labour supporters, a total failure to resolve the problems of the British people, and an eventual Tory comeback.

The present government has come to office after a period of left advance within the Labour

movement. This has expressed itself particularly in the trade union and industrial field, where attempts by both Labour and Tory governments to shackle the unions were smashed, Heath's "confrontation" policy defeated, and progressive decisions on many major issues adopted by the Labour Party Conference and the Trades Union Congress.

Those who underestimate this development of the left fight, see no significance in the changes in the Labour and trade union movement, and divide all trade union leaders and MPs into two categories, genuine right-wingers and "fake lefts", cannot make any contribution to carrying forward the struggle for a new policy.

At best, they engage only in propaganda attacks on the right-wing, but lack any strategy for weakening its grip. At worst, they objectively help the right by disrupting and confusing the left.

Struggle within the Labour Movement

But it would be equally wrong to believe that the left advances have as yet broken the grip of the right-wing on the Labour movement. They have meant that concessions have had to be made to the left on some questions, that some of its demands have been incorporated in the Labour Party's election manifesto, and that, while Reg Prentice assumes the role of the "hammer of the left", Mr. Wilson often tries to dress up his basically right-wing policies in left-sounding phraseology, to placate those who are demanding a new approach.

Sometimes the result of the conflict between left and right is that proposals are put forward whose aim can be interpreted differently. Thus, the left sees the National Enterprise Board as a possible means of extending nationalisation, and the right sees it as a means of propping up the private sector.

There is also a natural tendency on the part of Labour supporters to "give the government a chance" in the first weeks, or even months, after it takes office. They are often reluctant to believe that its policies are wrong, even when these policies clearly repeat the mistakes of past Labour governments.

For all these reasons, there can be different estimates on the left of the character of the government and of what its strategy actually is, and therefore the way the left should campaign.

One estimate was made by the editor of *Tribune* in his article on December 6, 1974, on the special Labour Party Conference the previous week, when he wrote that the argument in the Labour Party was "about how quickly the Labour government moves toward democratic Socialism in this country and the means by which it brings

it about."

One of the purposes of the present article is to argue that the weeks which have elapsed since the General Election on October 10 last year have already shown that the basic differences are not about the pace of the advance toward Socialism, but between those who want such an advance and those who see only the need to prop up a bankrupt and rickety capitalist system.

The *Tribune* position is, in fact, the mirror-image of that contained in a passage in Mr. Wilson's speech to the Labour Party Conference, in which he had some fun at the expense of those who, he claimed, criticised the government because, after only six weeks, "the manifesto on which the election was won has not yet been implemented."

No one is more adept than the Prime Minister in the art of erecting Aunt Sallies in order to knock them down. The charge the government has to meet is not that it failed to implement the whole of its manifesto in six weeks, but that if it continues on its present course it will not even begin to fulfil the hopes of those who elected it in five years.

The danger signals are clear. A massive, sustained and united fight by the left is needed if this government is not to repeat the history of previous Labour governments and end up by frustrating and disillusioning its supporters and preparing the way for a Tory comeback.

Tory Crisis of Leadership and Policy

The result of the October General Election was itself a comment on Labour's policy and campaign. The significance of the Labour victory over the Tories should obviously not be underestimated. It would have been a most serious setback for the Labour movement, and a disaster for the country, had Heath's attempt to return to office succeeded.

As it was, the Tories received only 35.8 per cent of the votes in the United Kingdom, were pushed to third place in Scotland, with 24.7 per cent, and got only 23.9 per cent in Wales.

Their defeat has plunged them into a crisis of leadership and policy, with Heath only hanging on as leader because of the failure of his opponents to agree on a replacement.

Tory difficulties have been accentuated by the total failure of each of the challengers who have so far come forward to present a more acceptable image to the nation than Heath himself. Beside stop-the-poor-breeding Joseph and food-hoarder Thatcher, even the old organ-grinder looks like a vote-winner.

Behind this leadership clash is the deeper uncertainty in the Tory Party about what its policy,

tactics and strategy should be, after the failure of the attempt to defeat the trade union movement by the policy of confrontation.

But a funeral oration over the Tories would be premature. They have been in difficulties before, and recovered, not so much because of their own strength, but because of Labour's weakness. It could happen again, unless advantage is taken of their present disunity and disorientation to deliver the *coup-de-grace*.

Labour's own election showing, though a victory, was hardly a triumph. The government has a narrow majority of seats in the House of Commons, but only got 39.3 per cent of the votes in the country. Its total vote of 11,458,704 was the lowest in any post-war General Election.

Many electors who turned away from the Tories did not turn to Labour, but instead voted for the Liberals or the Scottish or Welsh Nationalists.

Thus, though the Liberals did not maintain the impetus of their February advance, polling 18.3 per cent (5,348,193) compared with 19.3 per cent (6,057,008), disillusionment with the traditional two-party set-up was again a feature of the October election.

Why did Labour not do Better?

Why did Labour not do better? Mr. Wilson chose what he thought was the most favourable time for the election. The full effects of the developing economic crisis had not yet hit the people. Since February there had not been sufficient time to put Labour's economic policies to the real test, and their defects had therefore not become fully clear to most electors.

The Tories, after the shock of February, had failed to re-group effectively under Heath. But the Labour government had enacted a series of measures, such as the repeal of the Industrial Relations Act, increased pensions, the repeal of the Housing Finance Act and the introduction of food subsidies, which contrasted favourably with the record of the Heath government.

Despite this, Labour did not make the advance which it hoped for, and which many commentators expected. There is no single reason for this, and there are dangers in seeking over-simplified explanations of a complex problem. But some of the factors involved are clear.

First, the traumatic effect of Labour's failure between 1964 and 1970 was not erased by subsequent experience. The battle over "In Place of Strife", the wage freeze, the encouragement of monopoly mergers and takeovers, the devaluation of the pound, the shameful Vietnam policy—all these had left deep scars. They also enabled the Tories to score point after point in the propa-

ganda battles of the election campaign.

Second, since February Labour had not succeeded in stemming the rise in prices. Thus, though ministers could say that the rise would have been even bigger but for food subsidies and other government measures, the fact remained that people were having to pay more in the shops, and Mr. Healey's claim that the rate of inflation was slowing down did not impress them.

Third, there was an almost total failure to counter the Tory and Liberal campaign against nationalisation and "State interference". Labour, in fact, got the worst of both worlds on this issue. The actual measures of nationalisation it proposed were relatively small. But the hullabaloo created by the Tories and their press was on as big a scale as if every big firm in the country was about to be taken over. And because Labour's right wing is against any major extension of nationalisation, the response of the government was hardly even a defensive one—it was more like a head-long retreat.

Fourth, the Labour leadership conducted an election campaign which, despite some shadow-boxing on the hustings, in practice minimised the differences between the parties, instead of showing Labour as a radical alternative to the Tories. There was no challenge to big business. Heath's talk of "national unity" was met with Wilson's claim to be even more in favour of it than the Tories. Denis Healey promised more profits for big business, but demanded that the unions observe the "social contract" and restrain their pay claims. Like the Tories, Labour leaders warned that there could be no improvement in the standard of living.

"Concealed Consensus"

No wonder that in the middle of the election campaign a *Financial Times* writer could say:

"This is why the campaign rhetoric of the three party leaders, which suggests that there is a great deal of difference between their various proposed strategies for combating inflation, is fundamentally phoney; what is remarkable about them, in such a bitterly fought contest, is their similarity."

He concluded that:

"There is a great deal of ritualistic posturing in the present campaign: the real differences of substance are not nearly so numerous or so unmalleable that the government that takes office in ten days' time will find it impossible to create a consensus if it wants to."

This "concealed consensus" policy of the Labour leaders failed either to inspire its own supporters and activists sufficiently, or to win to its side many who could have been influenced by

a clear and vigorously expressed radical alternative.

It is thus sheer nonsense for Reg Prentice to claim, as he did at a "Friends of Socialist Commentary" rally during the Labour Party Conference in November, that what prevented Labour from "romping home" in the election was the fact that its policy was not as right-wing as that of Hugh Gaitskell.

It was the right-wing which dominated the campaign, just as it has dominated every Labour government. Judged by the test of practice, it is right-wing policies which had failed, not those of the left.

Unfortunately, the present government continues to pursue such policies. The pressure of the left and of the mass movement, though strong, has not yet been powerful enough to compel a change.

LABOUR AND THE ECONOMY

The acid test of the government is its handling of the economic crisis. Every previous Labour government has floundered on this rock.

This government faces a crisis which is deeper and more serious than any since the war. It is a crisis of the world capitalist system. In the US the government has finally admitted that the economy is in a recession, and one expected to be the most prolonged and extensive of the post-war period.

The US Treasury Secretary, Mr. William Simon, told Congress on December 17 that the recession was expected to deepen, with another million people losing their jobs. He said that this would bring the unemployment rate (already 6.5 per cent, or 6.5 million people) to 7.5 per cent.

Under the headline "The Biggest Car Crash in History" the *Sunday Times* of December 15 described the situation in the international car industry:

"One-third of Detroit's labour force is either laid off or on some form of short-time. Five of Chrysler's six American assembly plants are shut down, until the New Year at least. In Europe, with men idle, short-time or taking extended holidays in Germany and Italy, redundancy is now spreading to France and Britain. With the slump in sales accelerating, European motor makers now have over 800,000 new cars in stock, about half the number likely to be produced in Britain this year."

Britain's Economic Position

Britain faces particularly acute problems. Inflation continues to rage. The best that Chancellor Healey could say about the balance-of-payments deficit for 1974 in his Budget speech was that he expected it to be "below the figure of £4,000 million"—that is, five times the 1964 level, allow-

ing for changes in the price level. Unemployment in October was 100,000 up on the year before, and still increasing. Capital spending fell by 4 per cent between the second and third quarters of 1974. The Confederation of British Industry in December forecast that investment will drop by 10 per cent in 1975.

In the same month, the National Institute of Economic and Social Research forecast a rate of inflation next year of up to 25 per cent, a fall of 2 per cent in real personal disposable incomes, a rise of only 0.5 per cent in national output, an unemployment figure of nearly 900,000 and a further devaluation of the pound sterling. Even this gloomy prophecy was held to be "too optimistic" by a number of newspapers.

Official figures published at the end of the year showed that industrial production in October was down for the third consecutive month. Between August and October it was 2.2 per cent lower than in the corresponding period of 1973.

All this raises the prospect of a crisis of unparalleled severity in the coming months. Yet the government proposes to deal with it by a policy which has abysmally failed to resolve less serious crises in the past.

Labour Government's Economic Policy

It is adopting the traditional Treasury tactic of keeping wages down, with the intention of making British exports cheaper and reducing the demand for imports. This, it is hoped, will stimulate the growth of exports and lead to an "export-led" boom. In the meantime, the deficit in the balance of payments is to be met by borrowing vast amounts from the international bankers. The chronic failure of big business to invest in and modernise British industry is to be dealt with not by taking over the big firms, and in the meantime preventing them from exporting their capital, but by attempting to bribe them with tax concessions and price rises.

Mr. Healey spelled this out very clearly in his Budget speech:

"One of the reasons for our disappointing performance is that by and large we have tended to invest less of our national output in new capacity than our competitors, and even where we have maintained the same rate of investment we have secured a much smaller return in additional output.

"Thus, although earnings in Britain have increased no faster than the international average, our unit labour costs and export prices in sterling terms have increased faster than those of our competitors because our productivity grew so much slower. So the decline in our relative living standards has been accompanied by a failure to achieve a balance in our external payments for any length of time.

"I am determined that we shall reverse this trend. This means devoting a greater proportion of our output to exports and investment than in the past—so that, at least in the next few years, the great majority of us cannot expect any appreciable increase in our living standards and increases in public expenditure will have to be held below the average increase in national output."

Thus the Chancellor admitted that the refusal of big business to invest in the modernisation of British industry is a main cause of the country's difficulties. But instead of taking over the guilty firms, or at the very least compelling them to invest less abroad and more at home, he proposes to make the workers pay for the crimes of the employers.

The main specific measures in his Budget followed logically from this. First, handing out £1,600 million to big business in the form of tax relief and increased profits arising from changes in the Price Code. Second, drastically limiting the rate of expansion of public expenditure over the next four years. Third, compelling nationalised industries to raise prices, so that electricity, gas, fares and postal charges will all go still higher. At the same time, the price of petrol is substantially increased. Fourth, keeping wages down through the social contract.

Like a Victorian employer attempting to convince the workers that poverty was good for them, Mr. Healey justified this policy by saying that the "new patterns in our spending" would "improve the quality of life" and that "the senseless accumulation of material goods of exactly the same type as the Western world has been producing since the war can no longer be regarded as the only guarantee of human happiness or the only measure of economic success."

No doubt seven million pensioners, and those who live in the four million houses described by Lord Goodman recently as "unfit for human habitation", will derive comfort from these words as they struggle through this winter.

Five weeks after the Budget, Mr. Healey declared that the outlook had darkened a good deal further. From his General Election and Budget statements that the standard of living "could not increase", he moved in his Commons speech on December 18 to the warning that "they could even fall".

This was the official recognition of what was already clear during the election, as the Communist Party said: that Labour policy would reduce the living standards of the working people.

Mr. Healey admitted that prices would continue to rise, saying "there is bound to be some further increase in the rate of inflation because of the increase in world prices, which was not expected

by any of us a few months ago, by the increase in nationalised industries prices, and as a result of the relaxations in the Price Code which were strongly supported by Conservative MPs."

The Social Contract

But then, with breathtaking disregard of what he himself had recognised as the main causes of continued inflation, he declared that "the key to controlling inflation in 1975 was likely to be the level of wage and salary settlements", and called for "the successful operation of the social contract".

Yet the social contract is not merely irrelevant to the main problems which face the British people, but will make them worse.

It also diverts the labour and trade union movement from the fight against the real causes of inflation and growing unemployment—the capitalist world's monetary crisis, the rise in raw material and food prices, the level of arms spending, the devaluation of the pound, high interest rates, and the stranglehold of the national and multinational monopolies.

Labour's emphasis on the social contract, which boils down to wage restraint, plays right into the hands of the Tories, the City and big business, who want to present the "excessive pay demands of the workers" as the cause of inflation, so as to prevent the development of a campaign against the monopolists, financiers and speculators.

Defenders of the social contract try to justify it by claiming that it is a bargain between government and the trade union movement, that the government is keeping its side of the bargain, and the trade unions should keep theirs.

Thus Employment Secretary Michael Foot, in an interview in *Labour Weekly*, on December 13, said: "It is just not true that we have set out to operate a rigid policy of wage restraint." He recited a list of measures which the government has taken or is pledged to take, including direct action on prices, keeping down unemployment, rehabilitating the social services and boosting industrial investment, adding after each one "That is part of the social contract."

But since when have such actions by a Labour government been regarded by the left (or, indeed, by many not on the left) as conditional on wage restraint?

Long before the right wing started demanding that pay demands should be restrained, trade unionists and Labour Party members regarded it as the first elementary duty of a Labour government to keep prices down, combat unemployment, improve the social services and increase investment (especially through nationalisation).

Even if Michael Foot was right in saying that the government had done all these things (and it has not kept down prices, unemployment is going up, social service spending is to be restricted, and the forecast is that industrial investment will decline next year) it would not be entitled to argue that the workers are therefore under an obligation to put more money into the pockets of their employers by holding back their wage demands.

And what if workers refuse to agree to restrain wages in response to a Budget so weighted on the side of big business?

Again, ministers have spelled out clearly what they will do.

Mr. Healey set the tone on November 12:

"If wages rise beyond the limits set by the TUC, the government will be compelled to take offsetting steps to curtail demand. The effects on the financial position of the company sector are bound to lead to unemployment...."

Mr. Callaghan followed up on November 27:

"Some trade unionists will not abide by it (the social contract). They will disavow it. But let those who do remember that a widespread failure on their part will bring both more inflation and more unemployment to their fellow workers and even to themselves."

And on November 28, Mr. Wilson told the Labour Party Conference what would happen if "the law of the big battalions" operated to "break the social contract":

"Then the only choices facing a democratic government are grave: either deflationary measures involving a reduction in public expenditure, which means cutting the social wage; or an increase in taxation, which, if it meant direct taxation, would be a straight cut in take-home pay, or would mean a cut in the purchasing power of the pay that was taken home. And both these remedies would result in unemployment for our people."

This is the classic tactic, pursued by Tory and Labour governments again and again, of trying to scare the workers into accepting reduced standards on the ground that, if they don't, the government will take steps which will result in mass unemployment.

In fact, the existing policy of the government is pushing up unemployment, which can only be fought by increasing workers' purchasing power, not reducing it through the Budget measures and the social contract.

A False Choice

Nor, despite protestations to the contrary, has the possibility of a statutory wages policy been ruled out. On November 26 Lord Beswick, Minister of State in the industry department, said:

"I am asked what will happen if the contract is broken. I would rather look at it another way. How can we help ensure that the contract is kept? ... A rigid statutory control of all incomes in all places of employment, large and small, is a recipe for trouble. But if we are to build up a respect for the voluntary system we must not refuse to consider additional support for that system if it seems necessary."

In plain language, that means financial or legal sanctions to enforce pay restraint. It was the idea behind Shirley Williams' proposal to penalise firms making high wage settlements, subsequently withdrawn. According to press reports, an alternative scheme having the same aim in view is being considered by ministers.

If trade unionists succumbed to the blackmailing threats of Healey, Callaghan and Wilson they would not avert unemployment, but make it more massive.

What is most appalling about the statements of ministers is the failure even to consider the possibility of any alternative to traditional capitalist policies. The choice is presented as between keeping down working class consumption by voluntary restraint—the social contract—or keeping it down by government financial or taxation measures.

This is a false choice, since both courses have the same aim and would lead to the same bad results for the workers.

The real choice is between meeting the crisis with traditional capitalist measures, or tackling it by radical, progressive policies which involve determined State intervention in investment, industry and trade, a substantial extension of public ownership, and a taxation policy which redistributes wealth from the rich to the less well-off sections of the community.

The government's refusal to take the second course is underlined by its plans for the National Enterprise Board, which some on the left hoped would be a means of weakening monopoly and extending nationalisation.

Mr. Wilson has made it quite clear that the government has no intention of using the NEB in this way. The Budget speech first aroused the anxiety of left MPs when it announced that £1,000 million would be made available to industry for investment over the next two years by the big City financial institutions and banks. This was interpreted as undermining the proposed investment policies of the NEB.

The Prime Minister put the matter beyond doubt when, addressing the Labour Party Conference, he announced that the Industrial Reorganisation Corporation first set up in 1966 was to be reinstituted "as one of the roles of the National Enterprise Board".

It was during the reign of the IRC that one of the greatest waves of mergers and takeovers ever seen in Britain took place. Far from hindering this process of monopolisation, the IRC assisted it, putting millions of pounds of public money into the pockets of the businessmen involved, and promoting plans (such as the GEC merger) which put thousands of workers out of work.

Mr. Wilson did not tell the Labour Party Conference whom he had chosen as "industrial adviser" to the government and supervisor of the NEB. Had he done so there would have been uproar. For his choice, made already, but only announced in the week after the conference, was Sir Don Ryder, head of Reed International, owners of the *Daily Mirror*, *Sunday Mirror*, *Sunday People*, scores of periodicals, a large share in the Associated Television Corporation, the Reed newsprint firm, and many other industrial and financial concerns.

Sir Don's appointment was naturally greeted warmly in the City. It is the clearest possible signal to the big firms that they have little to fear from the government and the NEB.

THE COMMON MARKET

A further major indicator of the government's strategy is its attitude to withdrawal from the Common Market. Since Britain entered the European Economic Community the divisions in the Labour Party leadership on this question have been muffled by the decision to concentrate on "renegotiating" the terms of membership, and the promise to consult the people on the final terms agreed.

This was the position adopted in both 1974 election campaigns. The tactic was justified by the claim that it was necessary to preserve the unity of the party. Any harder attitude to the Market, it was said, would have provoked Roy Jenkins and the Marketeer minority in the party to dissociate themselves from it, and so caused a split.

In the event, the party got the worst of both worlds. It failed to attract to its side the large numbers who could have been won by a clear anti-Market stand. But appeasing the pro-Marketeers in the party only encouraged them in their disruptive course.

Thus, at the height of the election campaign, Mrs. Shirley Williams presented the Tories with a gift when she said that if the referendum went against the Market she would resign, and Roy Jenkins followed with a similar statement the next day.

There were those on the left who said that Mr. Wilson had to play it cool on the Market during the election campaign, but once in Downing Street again he would make sure of Britain's withdrawal.

Mr. Wilson's Real Aim

Unfortunately, everything that has happened since polling day points to the opposite conclusion—that he would not commit himself on withdrawal because his real aim was, and is, to stay in.

At the November Labour Party Conference the platform fought desperately to defeat the resolution which called for a special party conference in 1975 to decide on policy prior to the holding of a referendum on the Market.

This resolution also demanded eight safeguards which must be ensured before any recommendation on the Market is put to the people.

These were:

1. The need for parliamentary sovereignty and the right of the British parliament to reject any European Community legislation, directives or orders when they are issued, or at any time after they are issued.
2. The right of the British parliament to bring any firm in Britain under public ownership, and to control and regulate industry by financial or other means as they require.
3. The right of the British parliament to restrict capital inflows and outflows.
4. The right of the British parliament to determine its own taxation policy.
5. The right of the British parliament to subsidise food and import food free of duty.
6. The right of the Commonwealth and underdeveloped countries to export to Britain on terms at least as favourable as before Britain entered the EEC.
7. The right of the British parliament to control movements of labour into Britain.
8. The right of the British parliament to independently determine its own defence policy.

The resolution was carried by 3,007,000 to 2,849,000 votes.

It is clear that, though it speaks of "safeguards", it makes proposals which are totally incompatible with the Treaty of Rome and the whole basis on which the EEC was set up.

Mr. Wilson lost no time in showing that he intended to take no notice of it. In a speech on December 7 he studiously avoided any reference to a special Labour Party conference to discuss the renegotiated terms, saying: "It stands to reason that provided we get the right terms... I shall commend them to the British people, and recommend that we should stay in and play our full part in the development of the Community."

He then outlined his conception of the issues for renegotiation:

1. Major changes in the Common Agricultural Policy, so that it ceases to be a threat to world trade in food production, and so that low-cost producers outside Europe can continue to have access to the British food market.

2. New and fairer methods of financing the Community budget so that our contribution to Community finances is fair in relation to what is paid and what is received by other member-countries.
3. Rejection of any kind of international agreement which compelled us to accept increased unemployment for the sake of maintaining a fixed parity, as was required by the proposals then current for a European Economic and Monetary union.
4. The retention by Parliament of those powers over the British economy needed to pursue effective regional industrial and fiscal policies.
5. An agreement on capital movements which protects our balance of payments and full employment policies.
6. The economic interests of the Commonwealth and the developing countries must be safeguarded.
7. No harmonisation of Value Added Tax which would require us to tax necessities.

The Main Problems Dodged

Compare these points with those of the resolution passed at the special Labour Party conference and it is obvious that Mr. Wilson was dodging the main problems of Market membership.

To put his attitude beyond any doubt, he then went off to the Paris Common Market Summit on December 9 and signed a communiqué which also flatly contradicted the Labour Party Conference resolution.

Even on the issue on which we were told in advance that Britain was going to make a firm stand—the contribution to be made to the Common Market budget—all he got was a formula so vague and obscure that it can mean anything or nothing.

The agreement on the regional fund, which was supposed to be the salvation of the depressed areas, means that Britain will get only about £70 million over three years, or £23 million a year. But we are paying to the Market about eight times that amount in the form of our budget contributions, and will pay very much more in the future if we stay in.

Mr. Wilson agreed to a phrase in the communiqué which formally buries the principle of unanimity among the Market countries on questions where “vital material issues” are threatened, saying “In order to improve the functioning of the Community, they (the heads of government) consider it necessary to renounce the practice of making agreement on all questions conditional on the unanimous consent of the member states, whatever their respective positions may be regarding the conclusions reached in Luxembourg on

January 28, 1966.”⁽¹⁾

British ministers claim that in practice majority votes will not be taken where a country's vital interests are threatened. Nevertheless, the Prime Minister agreed to a formulation which makes no such reservation, and which, if words mean anything at all, accepts that majority decisions of the EEC ministers become law in each individual country.

Then, instead of seizing on the difficulties which have prevented much progress being made toward complete “economic and monetary union” in the EEC as a reason for abandoning the whole idea, Mr. Wilson endorsed the declaration by the ministers that “in this field their will has not weakened and their objective has not changed since the Paris Conference.”

Yet the aim of the economic and monetary union is to achieve permanently fixed and convertible exchange rates between the member states, and remove many of the powers to control their own economies which they previously had. These are already severely diminished by the EEC policies on free movement of capital and labour, or trade, on government assistance to industry, etc.

The full economic and monetary union, if it was achieved, would virtually end the sovereignty of the member countries, already substantially eroded, and turn them into mere regions of the EEC.

When he reported to Parliament on the Paris Summit on December 14, Mr. Wilson said that European union was “a desirable objective” and “we are happy to go along with the references to European union”, but there was no agreement on what it meant, and that while “we accept it as a long-term objective” it was “not accepted by anybody as an objective for 1980.”

Now either West European union is a good thing or a bad thing for Britain. If it is a good thing, the sooner it is achieved the better. If it is a bad thing, it should be opposed.

Mr. Wilson is trying to hunt with the Common Market hounds and run with the anti-Common Market hares. To the former he says that the aim of West European union is “very desirable”. To the latter he says, “don't worry—it's a very long-term objective”.

Sovereignty Undermined

The fact is that setting this as the aim, even if its realisation is long delayed, assists in the present

⁽¹⁾The Luxembourg meeting reached a so-called compromise on the question of whether a member-country of the EEC should have the right of veto on decisions of vital importance to it. In fact, the “compromise” simply recognised the divergence of views on the matter.

efforts to bind Britain with the Common Market shackles, which already deprive the country of a large measure of its sovereignty.

It is this attack on the right of the British Parliament to take political and economic decisions corresponding to the needs of the British people, rather than those of the West European trusts, which is at the heart of the Common Market issue.

But this central point is not being discussed in the negotiations about "terms". The government is trying to confine the public argument to such questions as the Community budget, the regional fund, and so on. Even on these questions, as has been shown already, it is retreating. On the major issue of sovereignty, it is not even putting up a fight.

It was alleged that economic benefits from membership would more than make up for any restrictions on Britain's freedom of action.

Entry into the EEC was going to open up for British exporters a vast new market for their goods, and this would help solve the balance-of-payments problem.

The opposite has happened. It is the British market which has been opened up to West European goods. The original Common Market countries export far more to us than we export to them.

So the trade deficit of Britain with the Common Market Six in the first ten months of 1974 was at an annual rate of £2,075 million compared with £69 million in 1970. In the first six months to the end of October, 1974, the deficit was £1,076 million compared with £246 million for the corresponding period in 1972. (Figures given by Mr. Peter Shore in the House of Commons, November 18, 1974.)

An effort is now being made to suggest that the Common Agricultural Policy has been so changed as no longer to be a threat to Britain.

Yet Mr. Wilson himself had to admit that the problems Britain faces on sugar are due to the Common Market, though he put the blame on the "appalling terms" accepted by Mr. Heath. But he naturally did not point out Labour had been unable to resolve the problem within the Common Market framework, and that in the negotiations on beef and sugar the government had now accepted the scandalous EEC intervention policy which has resulted in a "beef mountain" of 225,000 tons, alongside the butter mountain and the wine lake.

The Marketeers, having dragged the country into a set-up which has made all our difficulties worse, now have the gall to make this very fact an argument for staying in.

Thus Lord Gladwyn wrote recently: "As Mr.

Callaghan says, we are now so 'enmeshed' in the Market that we could only break it at enormous cost and in circumstances amounting to national bankruptcy."

If this were indeed the result of so short a period of membership it would be a very strong additional argument for getting out before the future cost became even greater.

But Lord Gladwyn is talking nonsense. It is staying in which is costing us dear and threatening us with bankruptcy. Getting out would put us in a better position to carry out the radical new policies needed to tackle the crisis and save Britain.

In Mr. Wilson's Summit report to Parliament he went out of his way to repeat that he would take no notice of Labour Party conference decisions on the Market, but would base himself on his own interpretation of the Labour election manifesto, saying "I had quite a lot to do with the drafting of the manifesto."

It was, indeed, drafted in such a way as to enable the government to negotiate to stay in the Market, and at the end of the negotiations to claim that they had been successful.

Tory and Liberal Praise

The Tory and Liberal leaders had no doubt that this was now Mr. Wilson's aim, and lavished

SOCIAL CONTRACT cure-all or con trick?

by Bert Ramelson, 15p

This 32pp pamphlet examines in detail all the main arguments advanced for the Social Contract and systematically demolishes them. It explains the real causes of inflation, unemployment and other problems facing the British people, and shows that the policy of wage restraint which is at the heart of the social contract would make them worse. The pamphlet also outlines the alternative policy which the labour movement should fight for.

Available from usual supplies or:—

**Central Books, 37 Grays Inn Rd., London,
WC1X 8PS**

praise on him for the "progress" made at the Paris talks.

Those on the left in the Labour Party who still hope that "Harold will be all right on the Market in the end" had better not rely on it. *Tribune*, even after his December 7 speech, was still trying to counter the claim that the speech foreshadowed a Wilson recommendation for staying in.

The paper claimed on December 13 that the Tory press was trying to "shake the Labour movement's faith in its ability to approach, in a united fashion, the question of whether Britain stays in or comes out of the Common Market. Every effort will be made to spread the idea that the party will fall into many warring factions when the decision is put to the British people in a referendum later this year."

But surely Roy Jenkins and Shirley Williams have already made it clear that they intend to fight for Britain to stay in at all costs, and will resign if the decision goes the other way. What unity can there be between them and those who are against staying in?

The Tory press is, of course, doing its utmost to help Roy Jenkins and Shirley Williams, but this is because they are objectively helping the Tory campaign on the Market.

It does no service to the Labour movement to try to brush all this under the carpet. The unity needed is not unity with Roy Jenkins and Shirley Williams, but the unity of all the anti-Common Market forces, with those of the Labour movement in the leadership.

Only the most powerful mass campaign can ensure British withdrawal. If that campaign was sufficiently strong it is conceivable that Mr. Wilson, in the last resort, would take it into account in deciding his attitude before the referendum. But what will be decisive is the campaign among the people, and the need for that is underlined in every speech and action of Mr. Wilson and Mr. Callaghan today.

ARMS AND FOREIGN POLICY

The government's attitude to the Common Market is bound up with its general foreign policy. For the real motives of the pro-Market forces have always been primarily political.

They see the EEC as a means of combating the advance of Socialism—in other words, as the political and economic counterpart of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation.

Some have argued that it can also be a counter to United States influence and power, and indeed this element of inter-imperialist antagonism is present.

But it is not the dominant factor, and the antagonisms between the Common Market coun-

tries themselves have prevented any united stand against US influence. The weight of the British government has in fact been thrown against any weakening of the ties with the US, and Mr. Callaghan is the foremost exponent within the EEC of "Atlanticism". It was because General de Gaulle feared that Britain would play this role of America's Trojan horse within the Market that he kept us out for so long.

Mr. Heath allayed the French fears by striking a somewhat more nationalist note in relation to the US, while continuing in practice to support US policy in Vietnam, allow the US to retain its nuclear base in Britain, and protest his loyalty to the US-dominated NATO alliance.

Now Mr. Callaghan, who we are told has established an excellent relationship with Dr. Kissinger, is proclaiming the indispensability of the Atlantic Alliance and warning against any weakening of the links between Western Europe and the US.

Cold War Policy

The basic anti-Sovietism of Labour's right wing was expressed most clearly by defence minister Roy Mason in the Commons debate on the defence cuts on December 16, when he said that

"While it was essential the review should take account of the economic realities, he had also in the forefront of his mind the other realities of the continuing threat to Western security posed by the massive and growing power of the Warsaw Pact. (Conservative cheers.)"

"The Western alliance was a defensive alliance. If Britain reduced her contributions too far, and this example were followed by other countries, there was a serious risk that the credibility of NATO strategy would be destroyed. (Renewed Conservative cheers.)"

The Times, December 17, 1974

It is because of this cold war policy that the arms cuts are, as left Labour MPs pointed out, phoney cuts.

Instead of cutting arms expenditure, the government proposes to increase it. It will go up from £3,600 million in 1974-5⁽²⁾ to £3,700 million in 1975-6, rising to £3,800 million in the following year.

All that the government proposes is to increase arms spending by a somewhat smaller amount than the Tories would have done.

(2) £461 million was added to this figure in a supplementary estimate presented to Parliament on December 10, 1974, repeating the pattern of previous years, in which the original estimates have usually been substantially exceeded. This process is likely to continue.

Thus, when spending on the social services is to be severely restricted, the pensioners denied decent pensions, workers told they must restrain their wage demands, and the price of school meals increased by 25 per cent, the huge burden on the economy imposed by arms spending is not only to continue, but be increased.

In this respect also the government is repeating the follies of past Labour governments, whose proposals for social service and other reforms have been repeatedly wrecked on the twin rocks of excessive military expenditure and refusal to challenge big business.

In his speech in the debate on the Queen's Speech, Mr. Callaghan did pay lip service to the need for detente, and said that the government had given "the strongest possible support to discussions in the European Security Conference".

This ambiguous phrase covers up the fact that Britain has all too often been on the side of those attempting to hold up progress toward a European Security Treaty.

It is hardly a contribution to detente to continue to peddle the old discredited rubbish about a Soviet and Warsaw Pact threat to Britain, and to spend still more on arms.

Such attitudes do not augur well for the success of the forthcoming visit of the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary to the Soviet Union. Welcome though the announcement of this visit was, it can only be really fruitful if the British ministers recognise the need to eradicate the last remnants of the cold war, and put relations between Britain and the Soviet Union on a new basis.

THE BATTLE BEGINS

In this article it is not possible to deal with the government's policy on Northern Ireland, the Terrorism Act, South Africa and Chile, the Shrewsbury 2, the Clay Cross councillors, and other important questions.

But the pattern is the same: a failure to make a clean break with bankrupt past policies, an acceptance of capitalist class values, and the operation of capitalist class laws.

If the policy and strategy of the government, as estimated above, were the only factors in the situation, the prospect would be grim indeed.

Fortunately there is another side to the picture—the beginning of the challenge from the left.

Challenge from the Left

Labour governments normally enjoy a honeymoon period for some time after they take office, in which criticism is muted and pressure from the left relaxed.

But, with the deepening of the capitalist crisis, the honeymoon periods become shorter and

shorter, since governments are compelled by events to show their hand at an earlier stage.

This government has already met, in the first few weeks of its life, a series of challenges from militant trade unionists and from the left in the Labour Party which reveal the basis which exists for developing the fight for a new policy.

Successful struggles by many workers, including car, road haulage, ICI, and bank and insurance employees, have been waged despite the attempts to use the social contract to hold them back. The miners rejected the Coal Board's attempt to divide them through the national productivity deal.

Strong protests have been made at the continued imprisonment of Des Warren and Ricky Tomlinson, the building workers sentenced at Shrewsbury, including the resolution passed at the November Labour Party Conference.

The conference also carried the resolution on the Common Market referred to earlier, as well as condemning the government's policies on Chile and South Africa.

On December 16 over 50 Labour MPs voted against the government as a protest against the phoney "arms cuts" policy.

These are significant developments in the early life of the government, especially in view of the small size of its majority and the inhibiting effect this could be expected to have on criticism of its policy.

Yet the full development of the left fight is still held back by confusions on some key questions.

Some Confusions

At the Labour Party Conference the resolution criticising Healey's budget was defeated by a substantial majority. It is true that it could have been more effectively argued, but nevertheless the size of the vote against it reflects the continued uncertainty about the government's economic strategy.

This is linked also with unclarity on the social contract, on which not a single resolution was on the conference agenda to challenge the government's policy.

Both the bakery workers and the miners have seen how the social contract is used by the employers, the allegedly "independent" Conciliation and Arbitration Service, government ministers and right-wing trade union leaders to hold back the fight for justified wage claims.

A major effort to secure ideological clarity on the social contract, and to develop struggle in action against it locally and nationally, is the first necessity if the urgently needed changes in government policy are to be brought about. In this the new Communist Party pamphlet, "The Social Contract—Cure-all or Con-trick?", by Bert Ramelson, will be a most valuable weapon.

Alongside it must go the development of the most vigorous campaign for a "No" vote to the Common Market in the referendum demanded by the Labour Party Conference.

The pro-Marketeters are already pulling out every stop. They have millions of pounds at their disposal and the mass media on their side. There should be no underestimation of the size and scope of the effort that will be needed to secure a decisive majority vote for withdrawal.

Alternative Economic Strategy

It is not sufficient to argue against the social contract and the Common Market. The ideological battle will only be won if people are shown the alternative economic strategy, convinced of its practicability and desirability, and stimulated to fight for it.

Hence the need to show how inflation can be fought—by a price freeze, slashing of monopoly profits, reduction of interest rates, abolition of VAT (except on luxuries), and other such measures.

The balance-of-payments problem should be tackled by ending military spending abroad, controlling the export of capital, restricting imports to essentials, and selling private share and bond-holding abroad. This is the way to avoid putting the country in pawn to the foreign bankers, who, as in the past, will demand further attacks on working-class living standards as the price of their loans.

Instead of holding back the growth of the economy and increasing the danger of more unemployment, a policy of expansion is needed. It can only be successfully implemented if large-scale investment takes place, and that in turn can only be guaranteed by taking over the giant firms. Demand at home should be stimulated by higher wages, pensions and benefits, and the expansion of the social services.

Resources and finance for these objectives can be made available both by the expansion of the economy, by cutting arms spending in half, and by a swingeing wealth tax on the rich.

Fight for Extension of Democracy

There should be the strongest resistance to all attacks on civil liberties, such as the Terrorism Act, and the moves toward more authoritarian measures should be countered by the fight for an extension of democracy. Very important in this connection also is the combating of racism and fascism.

The counterpart of a progressive home policy must be a change in foreign policy, with vigorous

support for a European Security Treaty, more co-operation and trade with the Socialist countries, active help to the liberation movements, opposition to the racist regimes in South Africa and Rhodesia, no assistance to the Chilean fascist junta, and advocacy of international disarmament.

A clean break should be made with past policies in Northern Ireland, involving an end to internment, a Bill of Rights, and the withdrawal of British troops to barracks pending their complete withdrawal.

Such policies were put forward by the Communist Party during the General Election campaign, which warned that it was not enough to return a Labour government, and that continued pressure and mass action would be needed to compel the carrying out of a left policy.

Role of Communist Party

That warning has been completely justified by events. What has happened since the election has also shown the vital role played by the Communist Party, the Young Communist League and the *Morning Star* in the Labour movement.

Without the leadership given by the Communists on such questions as the social contract and the budget the unclarity in the movement would be far greater, and the development of the challenge to government policies much slower.

There has never been a time when the need for a party basing itself on Marxism, with clear Socialist aims and a strategy for achieving them, was so great.

The fear, uncertainty and even panic about the future which is characteristic of the capitalist world today contrasts sharply with the confidence and hope in the future seen in the Socialist countries.

Even anti-Communist commentators have to recognise the reality of Socialist achievements, and the fact that the Socialist world is not wracked by the soaring inflation, growing unemployment and economic stagnation of the capitalist countries.

In developing the struggle for our immediate policy to tackle the crisis, there is a greater need and opportunity to put the case for Socialism than ever before.

Building the party of Socialism, the Communist Party, and increasing the circulation of the *Morning Star*, are not only essential to the strengthening of the left fight to ensure that this government does not meet the fate of previous Labour governments—they are also an indispensable aspect of the battle to increase the Socialist consciousness of the Labour movement and open the way to the advance to Socialism.

Report to the Twenty-First Congress of the French Communist Party

Part II

Georges Marchais

General Secretary of the CPF

We publish below the fourth section of the report delivered by Georges Marchais, General Secretary of the French Communist Party, at the opening of the Party's 21st (Extraordinary) Congress held at Vitry-sur-Seine from October 24-27, 1974. The second and third sections were published in the January "Marxism Today". In the fifth section, which we do not publish, Marchais calls on Communists to build a "more influential, stronger and more active party". At the time of the 21st Congress, 80,000 people had joined the French Communist Party during the course of 1974—the highest number for such a period since 1947. Some 1,500 new cells (branches) had been formed since the 20th Congress in December, 1972, and the membership of the party was expected to total about 450,000 at the end of 1974. Extracts translated by Peter Avis.

IV. THE UNION OF THE FRENCH PEOPLE —WHAT IT MEANS

The union of the French people! This slogan was widely discussed during the preparation for the congress. It has been unanimously approved by the party.

However, as the discussion forum has demonstrated, it has sometimes been given contradictory interpretations suggestive either of opportunism or sectarianism. It is necessary, therefore, to clarify the complex new questions raised by this slogan.

A Driving Force for our Whole Activity

In the first place, this slogan "union of the French people" does not arise as something completely new. It is part of the natural development of our activity.

The whole history of our party is marked by the constant struggle it has conducted to bring about the unity of the workers, of the working-class, national and democratic forces.

It is marked by the slogans of the United Front, the Popular Front, the union of the French nation and the national front.

For us, unity is no tactic of the moment, no manoeuvre for a particular occasion. It is the driving force of our whole activity. And this is so for a single reason: that unity constitutes the only way of ensuring the success of the struggle of the working class and of the popular forces.

The facts prove it: the division of the working-

class, democratic and national forces has always signified defeat for the cause of justice, democracy and peace. And, conversely, when this unity has been achieved, it has always benefited the popular masses and the nation.

It is for this fundamental reason that our party has always sought with determination and patience to unite the workers, and to gather around them all the victims of monetary power, all the vital forces of the nation.

It is for this reason that, despite all difficulties, *the struggle for unity constitutes a constant principle of the policy of our party.*

In applying this principle, we put forward the idea of the Common Programme and we have struggled for years for its implementation.

When it was adopted, we chose the expression "Popular Union" to characterise the alliance that could be built on the basis of this programme. And, effectively, on the occasion of the presidential election, 13 million men and women called for fundamental democratic change.

This is a considerable success. But is it sufficient? No. It is absolutely necessary to extend this already impressive alliance still further so that it shall become *a large majority*. This is the necessary condition for achieving change, and it is a condition no less vital for bringing about with the greatest chance of success the important economic and social transformations that I have just referred to.

Resolutely advancing the slogan "Union of the

French people"—which we already took up on the occasion of our 20th Congress—means continuing our unity approach in a correct way adapted to present circumstances.

This is a realistic approach. Our slogan has indeed an objective basis: the extension of exploitation by big business to every social group, apart from a handful of lords of industry and finance. Accordingly, these groups have—despite their diversity—important interests in common.

There is, therefore, nothing Utopian about calling for the unity of these men and women who, together, constitute the people of our country, who share the same enemy and also the same interest in seeing France change course towards social justice, greater well-being, democracy and national independence.

Union on a Clear Basis

In the second place, it is evident that there is no question of our wanting union for the sake of union, of wanting a union without content or without principles.

Union for us means union to increase *the fighting capacity* of the workers, to enlarge, mobilise and consolidate *the struggle* of the working-class, democratic and national forces against the big business regime. We want a union to defeat the power of the monopolies, to install an advanced democracy, and eventually to take the road to Socialism. We want a union to ensure the success of a policy corresponding to the urgent needs and fundamental interests of the working class, of all workers by hand and brain, of the working people of the countryside, of the great mass of our people. Any other conception of union does not derive from a concern to serve the working class and the people, but can only lead to putting the working class at the mercy of the bourgeoisie or a part of the bourgeoisie, and stems, when all is said and done, from the most contemptible opportunism, indeed from electoral sharp practice.

This is why our party had to fight for long years to achieve the drawing up of the Common Programme with the advanced social and economic content which is essential to it and which is directly inspired by the programme drawn up by our party a few months earlier. And it is precisely because it has this content that the Common Programme constitutes the only possible basis of a broad and consistent union.

This Common Programme has now existed for two years. It has undergone the test of two great political battles: the legislative elections and the presidential election.

Almost half the French people joined together last May in approving it. More millions of French

people can be won over to support it.

It is therefore on a clear basis and around precise objectives that we wish to create the union of the French people: this basis, these objectives, are the cardinal points of the Common Programme.

Raise the Quality of the Union of the Left

Let us consider, thirdly, the different aspects of our policy of union with its slogan of the union of the French people.

This union entails raising the quality of the union of the left. It entails winning over further social groups to the idea and the objectives of democratic change. It entails gathering together all the men and women who are concerned to achieve this change, in all the diversity of currents of thought and political families to which they belong.

Let us take the first of these points.

We have been saying for a long time that the democratic revival of our country cannot be the business of a single party, not even ours. Union of the left, union of the democratic parties and organisations, is indispensable.

This union was obtained in 1972—largely thanks to our efforts—on the basis of a Common Programme for government.

Throughout these last two years our party has taken numerous initiatives to strengthen this union. And, if all our proposals have not met with the desired response, progress has been achieved in its consolidation. The agreement between our party, the Socialist Party and the Movement of Left Radicals constitutes the kernel, the axis of the union of the French people. The prospects are thus very positive.

Today we must, nevertheless, measure what remains to be done.

We want to go forward to economic, social and political transformations such as our country has never before known. We do not wish our people to experience, after a short period of success, the disillusionment they have known in the past. In short, we want to go further and higher than in 1936 and 1945. This objective necessitates a popular alliance not only of unprecedented breadth but of an unprecedented level of political consciousness.

We cannot achieve this except by raising to the required level the quality of the union of the left, the clarity and coherence of its analyses and explanations, the vigour of its actions. This is our concern in this matter today.

Communists and Socialists

It is because of this concern that we have been led to pose several questions about the attitude

of the Socialist Party.

1. The first of these questions has naturally to do with the very purpose of our union, with the objective of our present common struggle.

During the past few months we have been led to draw the attention of the Socialist Party to this question, and even to express our anxieties publicly.

In the aftermath of the recent conference organised by the Socialist Party, we were justified in saying that there was an ambiguity about whether the Socialist Party still considered that the common objective of the left parties remained the fundamental democratic change laid down in the Common Programme.

That the Socialist Party should consider it good to endow itself now with a socialist programme, and to draw up with others a project for a socialist society, is its own business.

We have said ourselves how we conceive socialism in France, in the Manifesto of Champigny in 1968 and, more recently, in the book "The Democratic Challenge". But at the same time, we are fighting loyally for the democratic transformations of the Common Programme. Matters are therefore clear so far as we are concerned.

By contrast, if one refers, for example, to the final declaration adopted by the conference organised by the Socialist Party, one observes that it contains absolutely no mention of the Common Programme while, at the same time, it presents socialism as the only "alternative" and as the only "new way". Moreover, in commenting upon this conference, Michel Rocard [ex-leader of the leftist Unified Socialist Party who, at the beginning of 1975, was expecting to integrate himself and his allies in an enlarged Socialist Party—translator's note] declared that for his part, it was naturally leading to "modifying the nature and the technical content of the alliance." These facts, and others similar, naturally lead one to ask whether the Socialist Party is not considering replacing the Common Programme with its "project for a socialist society", a project whose coherence is not evident, in which the workers would not find the important concrete measures they require to improve their present lives.

If the Socialist Party suddenly considers that the task at the top of the agenda is to engage without further delay in a decisive combat to install socialism in France, let it say so.

But, in this case, we do not see how one can reconcile this affirmation made in Paris with the silence observed in the constituencies by the candidates of the non-communist left on the subject of the Common Programme, whose objectives are after all less ambitious. We cannot see how

one can reconcile this proclaimed boldness with the slowness to accept a real, immediate and united action for the success of the Common Programme.

We think that it is this common action, developed on a clear basis, that meets the needs of the hour and the expectations of the workers, of all those French people who are suffering from the present situation and wondering about the future. It is more damaging than ever to be at the mercy of circumstances and give the impression that the objectives of the struggle are not clear and coherent.

The Question of Allies

2. The clarity of objectives must be matched by the clarity of alliances. This is the second question.

It seems that in the leadership of the Socialist Party there is sometimes anxiety that our slogan of union of the French people may be going too far. I have just shown that matters are clear in this respect.

They are, on the other hand, less clear when our partners in the left vote for Mr. Poher [President of the Senate], who is known to share the political views of the regime. They are less clear, too, in the local councils where alliances are maintained between the non-communist left and the right, camouflaged or not, under the label of centrism.

Rejecting for our part this type of alliance, we have, on the contrary—and without generally being repaid for it—given a place to Socialists and Left Radicals in the leadership of municipal councils in which we hold a majority.

At the stage we have now reached in our common struggle, it seems to us no longer possible to allow any ambiguity.

Relations Between the Parties

3. The third question concerns the content of the relations between our parties.

The big bourgeoisie has indeed not renounced, and it never will renounce, its efforts to disrupt the union of the left. It renounces them still less today when, confronted by the crisis of its system, it does not exclude, as a means of escaping from the present impasse, recourse to a government of the left that would agree to undertake the "loyal" management of its interests, in the manner of Mr. Helmut Schmidt. This is confirmed by the persistent speculations on the possibility of Giscard d'Estaing calling on François Mitterrand to lead the government, when it is quite obviously absurd to believe that a government of the union of the left would be able to apply the Common Programme with a

reactionary President of the Republic and a reactionary parliamentary majority.

It is true that the men of big business do not have the hope of achieving an immediate result. But, without any doubt, they are banking on creating the most favourable conditions for their plans in the future by limiting and, if possible, reducing the relative strength of the Communists on the political map.

In these conditions, in drawing the lessons from the recent by-elections, the political bureau of the party was obliged to say publicly that "the constantly repeated theme of the necessity to bring about a so-called rebalancing of the forces of the left is taking on an ever more pernicious character, for it includes also the idea of reducing the Communist influence".

That the Socialist Party should want to become stronger is something we understand well since we also wish to strengthen our party. We mean in this way to help it to fulfil its vanguard role ever more effectively, today in activity to defeat the power of big business, tomorrow in the task of applying the policy laid down by the Common Programme, and later in the struggle to build a socialist society. Within the context of this society, our party will—without substituting itself for the institutions of the state—have the role of providing a motive force, a leading political and ideological influence, so that our country may advance more rapidly and more certainly towards a future of prosperity, well-being and liberty.

In the field of struggle for democracy and socialism, as we have said many times and as we repeat now, we do not fear competition. Quite the contrary, we believe this to be natural and necessary and we mean to improve further our own activity on this clear and honest basis.

But this competition must not for one partner consist in making its aim to strengthen itself to the detriment of the other so as to be able to impose its own will.

We are justified in wondering whether such is not, even beyond the theme of rebalancing the left, the objective of the Socialist Party when we read in the final declaration of the recent conference: "The hour may be near when French socialism will be called on to play a determining role in the responsibility of power", which amounts to saying that the Socialist Party would attribute to itself the power of decision.

Such a policy cannot lead either partner to victory. For, just as we have no wish to dominate, neither would we accept being reduced to a supporting role. That would be contrary to the interests of the workers and of our people, and to the success of the struggle to implement the

Common Programme.

In our view, the relations between our parties must be based—we have often said this and we adhere to this position—on the equality of rights and duties in the loyal fulfilment of obligations arrived at together.

Certain of the questions I have just referred to are raised also with respect to the Left Radicals, who know the importance we attach to their presence in the alliance.

We raise these questions in no spirit of conceited aggressiveness, acrimony or partisan polemics, but with the intention only of developing the union while respecting the autonomy of each of our organisations.

We do this publicly because we have always believed that the workers, the French people, must be informed on the questions that concern them so that they may intervene directly in the course of events.

This intervention was a decisive factor in bringing about, as we had proposed, the union of the parties of the left on a common programme of advanced character.

Today, what we are concerned with is the consolidation and extension of the union which is required to promote the fundamental democratic changes aspired to by the mass of the French people.

This is why once again our party is fulfilling its role in informing the workers, the democrats, who must never lose sight of the fact that the defence and development of the union are their business, their battle.

Union with the Trade Union and Democratic Organisations

The union of the French people entails strengthening the union of the parties of the left, and union also with the trade union, professional and social organisations within the great popular movement that must be mobilised.

How do we see this collaboration?

First of all, we consider that these organisations, and in particular the trade unions, should be totally independent of the parties. The Communists who are active within them act, for their part, in strict observance of their programmes and their statutes. They do not seek to turn these organisations into front organisations for their party.

The second aspect we take into account in this collaboration is the fact that the trade unions have not, unlike political parties, the function of governing. The responsibilities of the two types of organisation are different and we do not intend to confuse them.

This being so—and this is the third aspect of

the question—it is clear that the trade unions, because of their own objectives of defending the interests of workers and their families and of seeking social and democratic progress, are being led more and more to join the parties of the left in social and political action.

We think that this co-operation can henceforth be extended, while respecting the principles I have recalled, to the common support of a programme whose implementation will precisely allow the great social and human conquests for which these organisations are fighting today.

In adopting this point of view, the CGT and the MODEF are making an important contribution to the union of the French people. We desire, being convinced that this is possible, that the representative trade union organisations, and the professional and social organisations, should also take their place in the union, while retaining their particular functions and their autonomy. We mean, in order to encourage this great alliance of all the organised democratic forces, to pursue, extend and deepen the links we have already established with them.

The Working Class at the Centre of the Alliance

The union of the people of France entails also winning over new social groups which should be brought together on a clear basis in a broad alliance.

At the centre of this great alliance, as the driving force and the spearhead in the struggle for change, there is the working class. I should like to dwell upon this point.

One of the consequences of economic and social development is the large-scale transformation of the working population into wage-earners. In 1954, out of every 100 people in the active working population, there were 62 wage-earners. In 1974, this proportion exceeded 80 per cent. The number of wage-earners now totals nearly 18 million, that is to say, three million more than at the time of our 19th Congress in 1970 and six million more than 20 years ago.

The working class alone comprises more than 10 million people. Since 1968, it has grown by nearly a million, while its relative weight in the working population has increased by 2 per cent. This total includes nearly 2,500,000 immigrant workers.

This growth is the result of industrialisation. The number of workers is increasing, especially of unskilled workers without any real qualifications. The working class is also becoming younger in its composition. This is especially so in branches of industry where mass production methods apply. It is also a prominent feature of all industries employing female labour.

To the traditional industrial sectors, in which the core of the working class is concentrated—factories, mines and shipyards—there are now added new branches that are increasingly involved in material production: this is the case in the key sectors as well as in those areas of activity that were for long dominated by small independent producers or home workers.

Moreover, as a consequence of the increased socialisation of the productive forces, an increasing number of operations in the sphere of distribution and exchange constitute a direct extension of the productive process: this is the case with many functions in wholesaling, warehousing and telecommunications.

Finally, the growing intervention of directly productive intellectual labour in numerous branches of activity serves likewise to increase the ranks of the working class. Technicians—productive workers without the function of management—tend to become integrated in the working class, especially in certain key branches.

Thus, the working class, far from being reduced, constitutes the overwhelming majority of the wage-earners.

Through the place it holds in the social relations, it is the working class that ensures, for the essential part, the production of material goods. It is equally this class that is situated at the heart of the mechanism of exploitation: it produces the surplus value that is appropriated by the capitalists, it suffers this exploitation in the most direct way. This is why it is the most concerned to pursue the struggle against big business right to the end, that is to say, to the establishment of socialism.

More and more concentrated within vast enterprises, it has at the same time a solid tradition of struggle. It has acquired a rich experience and has endowed itself with a strong Communist Party which gives its activity an unequalled effectiveness.

Deprived of all property rights over the means of production, as Engels said, it has “led increasingly to demand the use of wealth and of the productive forces for the benefit of the whole of society and not, as at present, for a monopoly class.” For this reason, it is led to take over the just demands of other social groups that are victims of the same monopolist class. The workers say to the popular masses: our liberation is at the same time your liberation; it is your only hope.

The essential force in the revolutionary struggle, it is therefore also the only class capable of providing the basis for a broad union against the policy of big business and for democratic changes. This underlines and increases its national role.

The presidential election provided an illustration of this. According to the opinion polls, 70 per cent of the workers voted for the democratic reforms contained in the Common Programme. They constituted the solid basis of the unity that was obtained on that occasion.

This is why it is an urgent necessity, a task of prime importance, to consolidate the union of the essential forces of the working class and to win over to this union the many workers and wage-earners who are not yet involved in it. The decisive means to accomplish this task is to increase within the working class, and therefore in the work places themselves, the influence and the organisation of the French Communist Party.

A Broad Alliance

Naturally, it is not a question of leaving things there.

The draft resolution draws attention to the diversity of the social groups that are victims today of big business and which it is therefore possible to gather together, to unite, on the basis of their common interest: the struggle against the domination of the monopolies and for the development of democratic reforms.

As our last congress strongly underlined, it is a question in the first place of the immense mass of wage-earners, clerks, technicians, engineers and supervisors, and intellectuals of various disciplines, who, without forming an integral part of the working class, are coming ever closer to it and, in some cases, sharing completely its difficulties of existence. They all have a fundamental interest in the implementation of the changes that will enable them to improve their daily lives, their working conditions, to express their creative talents more freely, and to take on new responsibilities.

It is a question also of the small and middle farmers of the countryside who are being driven off the land by the policy of the regime or otherwise being subjected to uncertainty, forced to work harder for a smaller real income and deprived of access to modern living amenities.

It is a question of the artisans and shopkeepers, of the small businessmen, all affected by the present measures of the regime which have forced some of them to give up their activity and rendered a greater number anxious for their futures.

Quite properly, the draft resolution also mentions the people in the armed forces, who obviously do not constitute a social group of the same type as those I have just mentioned, but who have a special position. Among them the idea is winning ground that they will enjoy infinitely better material and moral conditions for their activity within the framework of a policy that

will guarantee the right of citizenship to each soldier, that will link the army to the nation, putting it exclusively at the service of national interests, at the service of a policy of independence and peace.

In brief, we are developing our policy of union by basing ourselves on the standpoint that *"France cannot be divided into two halves whose interests are diametrically opposed. The decisive division line is between, on the one hand the great mass of the French people who live from their work and serve the country and, on the other hand, the narrow caste that owns and dominates the economy and the state. All the former can unite because they have today an essential interest in common: to break the yoke of big business, to lift France out of its rut, to live better and work in security and liberty."*

Making Things Clear

The pursuance of this major unifying policy naturally raises new problems, about which it is important to be clear.

Our slogan of the "union of the French people" does not, in fact, mean that the aim is to ignore or blur the social, political and philosophical diversity of our people. On the contrary, as the draft resolution underlines, our policy takes this diversity into account.

When, for example, we invite the small businessmen to choose their camp and not to mistake their true enemy, we are not in any way supposing that their interests are strictly identical to those of their workers. No, the former appropriate the surplus value that the latter produce and there exists between them a relationship of absolute exploitation. This is why, in all circumstances, without hesitation and with the greatest initiative, we take up and shall take up the defence of the workers, of their interests and their rights. This is for us a priority consideration.

This said, it is not the legitimate demands of their workers that is holding a knife at the throats of most of the small businessmen, but the policy of the big firms, the banks and the regime. There is their main enemy! It is in their interest precisely, therefore, to see the triumph of the democratic reforms that we propose, because these will break the overwhelming power of the monopolies and will allow them to maintain their development—a development that we consider useful to the balance and dynamism of the French economy. The difficulties they are facing as a result of the aggravation of the crisis of the present system can help them the better to see where those responsible for their present situation really are. Consequently, these difficulties can lead them, if we illuminate the experience they are now under-

going, to take their part in the battle being fought by the mass of the popular forces for democratic changes.

To put it in another way, we are proposing to the various social groups that they should join together, not in confusion or in some sort of union outside reality, but on a precise basis: ending the domination of big business, its policy of national pillage and its wish to pressurise the population by every means, and creating the conditions that will permit each to work in security and liberty.

Some "ultra-revolutionaries" proclaim themselves "shocked" to see us concern ourselves seriously with the problems of the peasant, the craftsman, the shopkeeper or the small businessman. They would have people believe that we want only to create an "alliance of the discontented". In fact, they only seek to reduce the possibility of the working class winning allies and, therefore, achieving success. We shall see to it that they do this at their own cost.

Christians and the Union of the French People

Moreover, France is a country in which a great diversity of currents of thought hold sway.

The union of the French people entails the support of millions of French people for the policy that we wish to pursue together.

There are, among others, French people who are Christians and those who are materialists. Between them there exist indisputable philosophical differences. We say it clearly: our party does not seek an impossible ideological conciliation with believers. We do not ask them to renounce their faith, any more than we mean to abandon our own convictions or the scientific basis of our activity. We do not want to choose for them how they should be Christians, nor to favour some of them against others. No, we say simply that workers and democrats, whether they be Christians or atheists, have demands and aspirations in common.

The evolution that has been evident for several years in Christian circles is becoming more defined today. Many Christians are aspiring to real changes, to a society that will be more just, more fraternal, and they say so. This was pointed out by the weekly *La Vie Catholique*, when it said: "Christians have a greater concern for honesty and truth, a strong desire to link their faith with their lives. They no longer accept being Christians when they go to church and for the rest of the time being more or less accomplices in the injustices of monetary power."

This genuine and profound movement is reflected to a certain extent and on certain questions by approaches of the Church itself. It is moving

a growing number of Christians to declare themselves for union with those who, while not sharing their philosophical convictions, share the same aspirations, and particular with the Communists. They realise more and more that the co-operation, the common struggle that we propose to them, is not a trap, a trick, but is based on a principled approach. They observe that this co-operation is established in genuine respect for the convictions of each, and in all honesty. We mean to strengthen our efforts to accelerate this evolution.

Workers, Democrats and Gaullist Patriots

There exist in our country men and women who are not at all great possessors of property, nor endowed with great fortunes, but who—being deceived by reactionary propaganda—consider themselves to belong to another political family than the left.

There are, for example, those men and women who have hitherto supported politicians calling themselves "Centrists" or "Reformers", in the belief that they have been thereby declaring themselves to be in opposition to the policy of the big bankers, the industrial magnates, the large commercial companies. They have thought that these "Centrist" and "Reformer" politicians were expressing their hope of change. What do they hope for today? They can see that the "Centre" is ultimately only one facet of the policy of monetary power, a spare wheel for big business. How can we envisage abandoning to reactionary influence those French people who have been and often still are tricked by anti-Communist propaganda? We shall never give up trying to show them that their real interest obliges them to strengthen the democratic current.

Many others consider themselves Gaullists.

In this respect, one comrade wrote in the discussion forum that it was a question of uniting with the UDR, the Gaullist Party. She presented the problem badly.

What do we have in mind when we say that the democrats and Gaullist patriots have their place in the union of the French people?

We have fought against the economic and social policy pursued under the aegis of General de Gaulle with an energy that we in no respect renounce. We alone—as a party—denounced the personal and non-democratic power of the regime installed in 1958. We consider—and this is a fact of history—that in the course of the subsequent years the big bourgeoisie has not only maintained but strengthened its domination. At the same time, we supported the positive aspects of de Gaulle's foreign policy, his wish to see France regain its independence, his initiatives in favour not only of peaceful coexistence, but of co-

operation with the Socialist countries, his refusal to allow the political, economic and military decisions of France to be taken elsewhere than in Paris. We did so all the more since these were objectives for which we have always struggled.

We consider that this line has been correct and that in following it most rigorously we have served the interests of the workers and of the nation.

This being said, I should like to recall what our party said in 1958. The referendum took place on September 28; 80 per cent of the electors had said "Yes" to de Gaulle; even a part of the electorate that had voted for us had not supported us. Six days later, on October 4, Maurice Thorez said at the central committee: "Above all, we must not put a cross against those who have voted 'Yes'." His whole speech was impregnated with this idea. He underlined the fact that the men and women who had voted "Yes" had done so for contradictory reasons. There were the discontented, of course, but there were also many workers. These contradictions would not fail to show, our comrade said, and the illusions would be dissipated. He added: *"But not without any effort on our part! They will not be dissipated unless the party helps to bring this about, unless the party acts and enlightens the masses with a policy of active and patient explanation."*

This is what the party did, comrades, this is what it did with a success that demonstrates how we were right to put the problem in this way.

Today, men and women who remain attached to Gaullism because they saw in de Gaulle the symbol of French independence and greatness, are alarmed to see the Giscard regime bow before American and West German demands, surreptitiously reintegrate within NATO, make itself the champion of the "political union" of the Little Europe of big business, accepting that the fate of the French peasants should be decided in Brussels, proposing "important losses of sovereignty" and gliding stealthily towards a new form of European Defence Community that would this time be a nuclear force. They no longer recognise themselves in the UDR leaders and deputies who are throwing in their lot, bag and baggage, with the Giscard d'Estaing-Chirac-Lecanuet coalition and with its shady schemes and sell-out of national interests...

It is to the workers, democrats and Gaullist patriots that we are appealing. And we state that we can join together "in a broad alliance with the aim of ensuring the unity, prosperity, greatness and blossoming of the national community". How could we resign ourselves to "putting a cross" against those who, for the most part, are

workers, ordinary people, victims of the crisis in the same way as the mass of the French people?

Conditions for a Great Popular Movement

In their hundreds of thousands, they have already heard our appeal, notably during the second round of the presidential election. We shall continue our efforts, for we are convinced of the fact that drawing together with these workers, these democrats and these patriots, with all democrats and all patriots, is possible and is necessary to put the country on the road to democratic change.

In brief, we want to create the conditions for a great popular movement, for a great national movement that will include side by side various organisations, men and women belonging to different social groups and currents of thought and at the same time conserving their own specific character; a great movement, composing a large majority, drawing its richness and its effectiveness from this diversity which will be put to the service of a great common aim: a French policy of social progress, democracy, independence and peace.

Only such a policy as this can provide the basis for the necessary gathering together of the vital forces of the country. Alone, such a policy can be the incentive for the national awakening that is necessary to lift the country out of crisis, and to ensure its renewal, its prosperity and its greatness.

That is what we mean and what we wish to achieve with our slogan "union of the French people".

Please post MARXISM TODAY to me every month.

I enclose:

£3.75 for one year
(U.K. and abroad)

Name

Address

.....
.....

Post with remittance to:

CENTRAL BOOKS LTD.
37 Gray's Inn Road, London, WC1X 8PS

Discussion on Inflation:

Further Comment on Inflation

Maurice Dobb

"So now we know all about the relative unimportance of monopoly so far as prices are concerned; how little difference the present degree of concentration makes to the purely economic working of capitalism; and how what was true of the competitive capitalism of last century still remains substantially true of advanced capitalist countries today!"

This might well be a reader's first reaction to the contribution to discussion on inflation in the November issue of *Marxism Today*. Possibly an exaggerated reaction. At any rate, it is all so smoothly done that one could be forgiven for wondering whether those "petty bourgeois critics of monopoly" (whom Communists once thought they needed as allies in the struggle against monopoly-capitalism) could have been better answered by any leading, and traditional, American economist spreading gloss over the "free market".

An unfortunate effect on at least one reader has been to make him break silence where he had hoped and intended to opt out of this particular debate. He will content himself, however, with taking up one or two statements of Ron Bellamy which strike him as particularly surprising and likely to obscure, if not confuse, the theoretical core of the debate. He will leave aside both the historical aspect (which particular element in a complex situation may have been dominant at particular dates) and the article's rather curious resort (it seems) to Friedman-like "monetarist" explanations, for those better equipped to take up.

Monopoly and Prices

Firstly, in section IIA of the article, in the course of "trying to clear the ground of some fallacious arguments", one comes across the quite surprising statement that ("without further additional assumptions" unspecified) a monopoly is powerless to raise prices where demand is elastic; it can only do so in the case of products for which the demand is *inelastic* (elasticity less than unity in the textbook jargon: i.e. demand changes *less* than proportionately to the change in price). This is certainly not true, and extends instead of narrowing the range of "fallacious argument". R.B. has evidently forgotten that monopolists are wont to use *restriction of output* as a principal

weapon; and it can easily be shown that (as compared with a fully competitive position) there is *always* some possibility of increasing total profit by price-raising combined with restriction⁽¹⁾—even if it be true that there will be greater scope for this when demand is relatively inelastic (shrinks little for a given price-rise) than when it is elastic. In the same paragraph it is admitted, somewhat incidentally, that the position is different if demand conditions change (an "upward movement of the demand curve"): something that is very relevant to the question of whether when wage-rises are occurring monopolists can pass them on, partially or wholly, into the price of wage-goods—a possibility which I gather R.B. does not deny.

Obstruction of Mobility of Capital between Industries

A second feature of monopoly which R.B. apparently forgets in the following paragraph is that the existence of large concentrations of capital under unified ownership and control obstructs (partially or wholly) mobility of capital between industries⁽²⁾ and hence *obstructs* the operation of the so-called "equal profit-rate tendency" which was the basis of Marx's theory of prices of production in *Capital*, vol. 3. Hence the "equalising" process can by no means be relied upon to happen, whereby the alleged "transfer of resources" into lines of production where demand and/or prices have risen suffices to maintain the *average* price-level at what it was before (as the so-called classical economists contended in the early, more competitive, days of capitalism). In other words, it would be quite fanciful to suppose that workers and others can comfort themselves with the optimistic view that, when consumers' demand for wage-goods rises, this will be followed

(1) On condition that costs are positive (not zero) and elasticity is less than infinite—not very restrictive "additional assumptions"!

(2) Unless, of course, this is organised by the big business concentrations for the purposes of their own, e.g. in pursuit of empire building and added powers of restriction; in which case they are likely to pursue the goal of maximising profit by the method of so-called "discriminating monopoly".

simply by an increased supply of wage-goods and *not* by a rise in their price!

If it were really true that inter-industry mobility of capital and the starting-up (or shift) of new firms remained the same as it had been in the pre-concentration, pre-big-business days, then indeed one could hardly speak even of a distinct "monopoly sector" and a "competitive sector", with the former stealing surplus-value from the latter. In my opinion, Pat Sloan is perfectly right to emphasise what he calls "the qualitative change... between competitive capitalism and monopoly capitalism" and that in the sphere of "immediate demands" it is monopoly, above all, which requires "curbing".⁽³⁾

A Qualitatively Distinct Stage

Of course, monopoly-power over markets and output (not to mention State policies) is never 100 per cent. What fool ever said it was? There is always in varying degrees *some* rivalry between the big concerns, if often limited to specific spheres only; and at least quite a number of small firms slip through the net or are tolerated by the big boys (often on condition that they observe the "price-leadership" of the latter and do not rashly encroach or undercut), and do not get taken over or swallowed up. To insist on such things as though their existence were crucial is surely akin to "tilting at windmills". When one looks at the capitalist world today, reads about the structure and behaviour of giants like I.T.T., takes account of the steady march of concentration in recent decades and the growing dominance of multinational firms, surely what strikes one is the altogether *different* degree of concentration and monopoly-power that confronts one today, compared with the early part of this century, and certainly compared with the last. Have we altogether forgotten the "watershed" in such development between the wars which caused even the US Senate to set up a special commission to report in as many as some 40 volumes (if my memory serves me) on the Concentration of Economic Power. Possibly this will be dismissed as a mere response to the "radical anti-monopoly movement of the '30s", and not as a recognition of reality.

But if the change in capitalism had not such dimensions, what is the point of Marxists inventing a qualitatively distinct stage called Monopoly Capitalism?⁽⁴⁾

⁽³⁾ *Marxism Today*, February 1974, pp. 56-58.

⁽⁴⁾ Little, I suggest, can be scored by saying that Lenin developed no theory of monopoly-price. The reason is surely simple, that he was engaged primarily with *imperialism*, and hence with international relations and rivalries.

Emendation of Berle and Means

As for the "new evidence" provided by the NIRB study, and its alleged emendation of Berle and Means: all that I can find shortly to say about it, and detect as its "lesson", is this: (i) that there seems to be no recognition in what R.B. says about this that when one is dealing with the prices of *inputs*, monopoly-power commonly operates on the side of the *buyer* and not only of the seller; (ii) that while there is, apparently, some give-and-take *between* monopoly capitalists themselves as regards *producers'* goods (bought by one firm from another), thereby effecting some degree of sharing of losses and shedding of profits, this rarely if ever reaches so far as the ultimate consumer in the shape of price cutting of consumers' goods, even when supply is for the moment out-running demand. And this is, surely, something that every housewife knows from her own experience, especially the experience of recent months and years. Even when she reads at times of cuts in wholesale prices, she learns how very *little* of this gets through to the retail price in her own shop or store—precisely by reason of those maintained or "administered prices" that R.B. seeks to play down.

A Further Theoretical Fallacy

To deal with one further theoretical fallacy (as I see it) in this article. It is sufficiently clear (and I cannot see how it can be seriously disputed) that the possibility of monopoly-power (or excess demand or anything else) causing an enduring rise in the general price level depends upon the monetary and banking system no longer being tied down to a commodity money standard (i.e. a gold standard). So long as it is so tied down, the *average* price level (as distinct from particular prices) cannot, save temporarily, diverge from the "normal" level as established by the relative values of gold and of commodities in general.⁽⁵⁾ What R.B. calls "the contention of Marx and Ricardo" will then hold: neither wage changes nor monopolistic price fixing could substantially affect the *average* level of prices for very long. Departure from a commodity money standard, giving at least *some* flexibility to the money and credit structure, is, therefore, a necessary condition for monopoly to affect the general level of prices (as distinct from particular prices within the monopolised sector). Curiously enough, R.B. seems to question whether "we are no longer in a commodity-money world," while speaking of

⁽⁵⁾ The result of any such temporary divergence being an inflow or outflow of gold, forcing the Central Bank to take counteracting and corrective action of the familiar kind.

“the many mediate links in the chain that connects prices to the value of gold”—and this despite the fact that the assumption of our being no longer effectively “in a commodity-money world” is also a condition of the “monetarist” theory of inflation which he seems to adhere to so curiously in the closing section of his article. But that in our immediate context is by the way. Following his assurance “that monopoly may not result in any rise in prices *even* in the monopoly sector” (p.343), R.B. goes on to say that “monopoly cannot raise the *average* level of prices without an increase in credit (or the presence of abnormal liquidity arising from earlier creations of credit)”, and to conclude from this that credit expansion and *not* monopoly is the essential *cause* of any rise in the average price level (“the creation of credit in sufficient volume is at once a necessary and sufficient condition for such a rise”). This argument, I suggest, is mere sleight of hand and should not be allowed to mislead us. Because a number of factors in a complex situation are jointly necessary for a certain result to appear, and are to this extent “conditions” necessary to the outcome, this by no means suffices to constitute any of them the unique and essential “cause” of that result: for one thing, the alleged “cause” might come

quite late in the chain of events triggered off by the originating change or event.⁽⁶⁾ That credit expansion is not a “sufficient cause” of any general price rise, as is alleged, is shown, I suggest, by the fact that when it occurs it may fail to have any effect in changing commodity prices or output or the level of employment, but simply affect the price of bonds (and via this the rate of interest). To use the claim that it *is* a “sufficient cause” as a reason why monopoly-power cannot affect prices is, surely, a *non sequitur*; so also is the conclusion commonly drawn from it that inflation can *only* be cured by restricting credit—although I can hardly believe that R.B. would wish to sponsor or lend support to a Friedman-Keith Joseph type of solution (e.g. in today’s Portugal, in yesterday’s Chile, or in the context of the *British Road*).

If, on the other hand, he *really* means simply to claim credit creation as a “necessary condition” (and no more), why is he so bent on denying even this status to monopoly?

⁽⁶⁾For example, a general price rise might occur, whether due to the pressure of monopoly or increased demand, and then sometime later depleted cash balances be replenished by increased borrowing (i.e. credit).

Review Article:

A Study of George Grosz

Ray Watkinson

Hans Hess, in his new book on the great German satirist, George Grosz, has done a much needed service not only in making available to us a great many good reproductions of the stinging drawings we first began to know around 1930, but in giving us a substantial critical life of the man who, having dealt some savage blows to political and social reaction in his own country, emigrated in the critical year of 1933 only to lose himself in the brave new world across the Atlantic.

Nothing would be easier than to present Grosz simply as a renegade, to point to the contrast between the sharp edge of his early work and the soft confusion of almost all that he produced after going to the United States in search of new success and a new self. Whatever justice there might be in such a judgment it would not deal adequately with Grosz’s power and achievement. He

left his real dynamic behind in Europe—a dynamic already exhausted—but the sad late years do not wipe out what he, with friends and comrades like the Herzfelde brothers Wieland and Helmut (John Heartfield) and others grouped around Herwarth Walden and his *Sturm* Gallery, round Count Harry Kessler and his publishing ventures, did during the years from 1915 to 1932.

From Dada to the Political World

On the last day of December 1919, Grosz, John Heartfield and his brother Wieland Herzfelde joined the Communist Party. Earlier in the year, Kessler’s diary had recorded what he observed of the rapid moves these men were making from the negative disgust of Dada to the political world proper. “Grosz himself is preparing a second issue of *Pleite* with still more caustic



Pandemonium, 1914

caricatures... he now professes himself to be a Spartacist" and later, "a visit from Wieland Herzfelde. He spent about a week in Moabit and Plötzensee prisons. His description of them is so dreadful that I felt sick with nausea and indignation. After what he has seen, he feels it impossible to strike a light-hearted note in his periodical. Only a struggle waged with the most extreme means matters any longer", and two days later, "Helmut Herzfelde expressed his utter repugnance to the publication of poems or indeed anything, that is just art. He and his friends are becoming more and more hostile to art. Wieland's and George Grosz's achievements are, it is true, artistic, but only as by-products."

Five years later, in a pamphlet jointly produced by Grosz and Heartfield, they wrote:

"There are still artists who deliberately and consciously attempt to avoid all tendentiousness, remaining silent in the face of social events, not taking part, not accepting responsibility. As far as art is practised for its own sake, it propagates a blasé indifference and irresponsible individualism. The artist today cannot withdraw himself from the laws of social development—today, the class struggle.

A detached stance, above, or on the sidelines, still means taking sides. Such indifference and otherworldliness supports automatically the class in power—in Germany its bourgeoisie.... The artist today can only choose between technical construction and propaganda in the class struggle. In either case, he will have to give up pure art."

Disgust with Capitalism

For most of us in Britain, Grosz hardly existed before the 1930s, when he was already at the point of turning his back on two decades of the most incisive visual criticism of society made in this century: especially incisive through its close attachment to everyday reality, the violent immediacy of its images. These drawings and prints, published in magazines and portfolios, exhibited in left-wing Berlin galleries, subjects of legal attack in the precarious Weimar days, repeated with endless variations Grosz's disgust—but also disgusted fascination—at the class-based corruption of capitalism.

So long as he could hold to that uncomplicated but not insensitive position, he continued his merciless exposures, sharper and clearer in their vision than any others. Did anybody else see and express so clearly, before Grosz, exactly what Hitler was about; back in 1923, when the Fuehrer of the 1930's was still the bitter ex-soldier in the shabby drab mackintosh whom few in Britain at all events took seriously enough? But Grosz had made a drawing in 1923 exposing Hitler as a crazed barbarian: around the same time he had published drawings of social types which were near-portraits of well-known financiers and politicians who, understanding very well what the National Socialists were about, eased their way to power. I think of one such—was it a likeness of Schacht?—reproduced here a little later by the then progressive *News Chronicle* over the caption "The smell of the people". But there were hundreds more, springing constantly to life from his brilliant pen, creating a new and truly 20th century style.

He had passed through some early years of extremely fashionable illustrations, in which the swirling elegances of pre-1914 *Ari Nouveau* had been tautened and hardened into something more severe, more geometrical. During the 1914-1918 war he had served briefly in the army, been invalided out and, resuming his activities as an artist, joined forces with those who did not merely see the imbecility of the war as destructive of the arts, of culture, but saw the culture in which they had been nurtured, the arts they practised, as expressions of a corrupt and senseless social order: the destructiveness was in the order, the art was the art of the system: the very notion of Art,

**Dusk, 1922**

indeed, and the creative artist as a special phenomenon, is a concomitant of capitalist evolution.

They declared themselves not only anti-war, therefore, but anti-art. They issued Dada magazines, made Dada exhibitions, Dada manifestos, Dada poems, Dada photomontages, Dada cabaret. There followed in 1917 the Russian Revolution, and they began to be drawn towards a different, a more positive understanding of the situation. They became more specifically political, more Socialist, finally Communist. The collapse of the German forces and the Imperial state, the Kiel Mutiny, the brief Bavarian Soviet Republic, the murder of Luxembourg and Liebknecht, the founding in 1919 of the German Communist Party, brought numbers of these disillusioned, savagely critical artists, writers, playwrights, actors, film-makers, into a vital new focus.

Grosz was a founder-member of the Communist Party. It was the logical step from the Spartacist position which Kessler had observed. His membership lasted a bare two years and did not survive a visit to still-chaotic Russia, and the bungling of a proposed exhibition of his work there: but his association with Communist and Socialist activists went on for another decade.

His great period of creative activity lay between 1915 and 1932: this was the time when he saw

most clearly what to fight and how to fight; the time when he made the most trenchant visual style any satirist has had in this century. He made that style because *style* was not what he was after. His earlier drawings, carefully elaborated, beautifully made, had been conscious refinements of a style: their accomplishment had grown naturally—which is not to say merely spontaneously—out of the vogue of *Art Nouveau*, out of the drawings of Beardsley, Emil Orlik, Maurice Denis; and behind them, Burne-Jones, Gauguin.

They were wonderfully contrived transformations of well-observed realities; but they were transcriptions that could in no way deal with the embittered, desperate vision of the world that fell about European ears as the Great War drew to its close. As a young, extremely gifted, ambitious artist, Grosz had worked hard to make a style as fashionable as any, and already more comprehensive than most. Style had been important; it expressed the young artist's sensitivity to the currents of art and social life around him; it was the necessary mask which he had to create to make a convincing appearance in the pre-1914 world of art: it was a tool, not yet a weapon.

Grosz's Style

When, in the latter years of the war and into the early 1920s, he threw all this achievement away and created a new kind of drawing to attack the society which had made him that kind of artist, he was by no means concerned, in the old way, to make a style. He was now concerned with expression, and a new style could only be the outcome of stripping away the hypocrisy, exposing the brutality and cynicism, the corruption, not merely in, but essentially of, that society. Instead of going to the world of Fine Art to find out how to deal with these problems, he looked at the drawings of children, the erotic graffiti of public conveniences: he worked as hard to throw away the polish and elegance he had learned as he had done to acquire it.

One of the essentials of that style was its supple, serpentine, beautiful line, defining images in wonderful two-dimensional arabesques, looping like a watersnake around slender figures—but no kind of beauty had any place in what he was now trying to do. Beauty as the driving force of an artist's conceptions would no longer do: it had become an unconscious conspiracy against reality, and it was not enough simply to discard it: its accustomed forms had to be attacked and destroyed.

Another elegance of *Art Nouveau* had been its careful placing of figures and objects in a well-defined area without the visual order of traditional perspective: a way of composing deriving

largely from the Japanese woodcut, quite different from the western tradition with its assumption of continuity of space and form within the bounds of the picture. To express the violent disruptions of the real world, the self-destructive nature of capitalist society in decay, there could be no assumption that either the spatial order of the west, or the eastern systems of pattern and rhythm, could contain the critical account of the world, physical and social, which had to be given, and given urgently. The beautiful line was destroyed, the subtle placing of shapes on a surface was disrupted; the continuities of space and form were exploded.

Grosz made lines harsh, wiry, summary, discontinuous: men and women, shops and houses, factories and beer halls, appeared harshly juxtaposed, superimposed: respectably dressed women were exposed through their smart clothes as tarts, naked: rigid officers drooled after them, fat businessmen pawed them: couples in obscene sexual acts were seen in the windows, or through the walls, of houses filled with utterly alienated persons in stark unrelation: blind men begged: ragged and hungry, the returned and crippled soldiers no longer hoped for work—but in the nightclub the profiteer and the swindler ate and drank grossly; the transvestites, the pimps, the whores made up an endless ghastly cabaret, while Mr. Norris changed trains. Exposure, not description, was now what drawing was for Grosz. He did indeed, in pursuing it ruthlessly, create a new, instantly recognisable style; but not by aiming at style. This was that discipline of a master which may set a style for followers and imitators, but is itself above and beyond style: its vitality exists by virtue of purposes beyond itself, and dies when the purposes are lost.

In the USA

This was the height which Grosz had reached by 1920, and this was the level at which he worked throughout the next ten years. When he went to New York in 1933, he was putting behind him all his great achievement, all that his satire had meant. Even if he had wanted to, he could not have maintained the style by which we came to know him and reaction to hate and fear him. But he did not want to. He knew full well that the style came from the intention, it only existed as long as he was in attack on things which, corrupt as they were, were of the essential fabric of the world that had made him. It could not be turned in positive directions; it had been created to destroy, it had nothing to say of ways out of the desperate world and how out of that world a new one was to be made. Nor did it have anything to say about the new society in which he

was going to recreate his life, taking up again his early ambitions as an artist—in the true bourgeois sense. There was plenty indeed to satirise in that New World: the horrors of the Great Depression were still the daily life of millions of ordinary Americans, even though the spectacular suicides of millionaires had ceased.

But Grosz had nothing critical to say about this society. He had now, again, to drop a style and make a new one, to deal with the new reality. But this time it was, as it had been when he was 20, a matter of making style, finding an artistic signature, winning recognition as an artist of genius, finding a place in the world of Fine Art, having exhibitions, selling important paintings, seeing his work in the museums.

He did, certainly, create a style to cope with his new world: or several half-styles. He worked with the elements of cubism—formal elements whose aesthetic remained alien to him: with surrealism, whose life depends on a psychological content to the effective exclusion of formal considerations. He made drawings and paintings of New York scenes; and he no longer had a style because he had no longer the purpose which, by reaching beyond formal and aesthetic considerations creates the true recognisable hand of the master. He was no longer that master. He was too late for that kind of success which he had hoped



Broadway, 1935

to find in the USA. His real success, which he was putting behind him, had made it impossible.

All this, with admirable analysis and illustration, with serious appraisal of Grosz's personality, the measure of his underlying identity with the thing he satirised, the political limitations of his career, as well as its political brilliance, Hess has laid bare for us in a much-needed and authoritative book, from which all that is missing is at

least a summary account of the controversies and shifting positions taken up after 1917, by the artists of the circles in which Grosz was so active and so effective; and by the political parties in Germany, and not least, of course, by the Communist Party. This is all the same a book which in so thoroughly exposing the career and achievement of one artist of real power, illuminates the whole period.

Discussion Contribution on:

Trends in Youth Culture

Judy Bloomfield

The tradition in the revolutionary movement of thinking not only that the antagonism between wage labour and capital is primary, but indeed the only one we need struggle around, has led to an unbalanced reliance on economic struggle and an under-estimation of the importance of the State. But revolutionary crises operate not only, or even necessarily directly, at an economic level, but at political and ideological levels—for example, the wars out of which so many 20th-century revolutions have triumphed, which brought a general social crisis of leadership, explanations and control.

Revolutionary forces are not composed only of the working class, but develop from oppressed groups and classes involved in other modes of production—e.g. peasant production, household production—subordinated to the capitalist product, but with relatively independent modes of work and specific consciousness. Revolutions erupt not only when these forces have been consolidated, but also when the ideological institutions and apparatus of the State are destabilised, and can no longer guarantee the acquiescence of the working class and its revolutionary formation to the ruling order. Neither of these two conditions arise spontaneously; they must be worked for. In this light, ideological and political struggle, among social strata and groupings with an objective basis for alliance with the working class, and within the structures of class domination, are integral to the struggle for socialist revolution.

Struggle in the Family

Therein lies the importance of struggle in the family, a question raised as a priority in the women's movement. For women, the family is the site of the sexual division of labour and the reproduction of rigidly defined sex roles. For children and young

people in general, the family and school together are the site where they acquire their class and sex roles. Parents—and particularly fathers—are invested with the responsibility and authority to coerce, instruct and mould their children in their own image, precisely because the ideological function of the family is to reproduce in the minds of each new generation the acceptance, as natural or inevitable, of capitalist power relations between classes, and to reproduce labour power with the types of values, ethos and skills, appropriate to its functioning in the capitalist economy. But the family is at the same time a site of struggle where, for example, bourgeois ideology, introduced from outside and spontaneously reproduced by the conditions in which the working class exist, working class values and revolutionary consciousness coexist in friction and contradiction. A male member may teach his son to defend himself in fights, how to bargain, how to stand up for himself, and while he is defending his son against the ruling class he may be reproducing the acceptance paternal authority *per se*, of male domination of women, of competitive individualism. The culture passed on is not only contradictory in nature but ajar in varying degrees with the changed conditions in which each new generation grows up.

The Educational System

School has taken over much of the former function of the family in conferring skills to the growing generation, within an education system regulated by the State, where competition is institutionalised by selection and content laid down by exam board requirements. The teacher is invested with a similar, if less intimately exercised and more openly coercive, authority. Progressive teachers can only propose an alternative within the given educational structure. They cannot operate outside of it, even though in

their attitudes and methods they embody the possibility of a different educational system.

Post-school education contains a similar tension in its hierarchical structure, but with a sharper distinction between official course content and the expectations and ideological persuasion of students. In factories where apprenticeships operate the acquisition of practical know-how supersedes the direct ideological content, but skills in themselves become a power exercised over the inexperienced and unskilled, and thus subordinated to the social and technical relations of production, to class authority and age divisions. Sex roles, parental and paternal authority and the possession of skills are all means of dividing the working class, not only within itself, but also from its allies. For these reasons, young people, in school, college, university, factory and, above all, in the family, share a certain identity, *because they are young*, and are learning, consequently possess only a weak bargaining power and are subject to capitalist *social authority* invested in parents, teachers, tutors and seniors in general.

Oppression of the Youth

Working class youth experience this oppression as part of general class oppression—as the customary control and determination of their lives by others—“them”. But for young people from petit bourgeois families their subordination to this social discipline is a highly contradictory experience, rubbing against much of the vaunted freedom of thought and action they are at the same time taught to expect. In that sense the “youth movement” can draw sections of young people from petit bourgeois and white collar backgrounds behind the working class in the revolutionary movement, through the exposure of the contradiction they experience as “youth”, as a contradiction in the social structures which guarantee capitalist class rule. The youth movement has expressed its discontent by questioning the effects of bourgeois control and culture, and has proposed spontaneous ideological counter (action). It is usually the role of a revolutionary party to reinforce the content of the revolt in this sphere, with its theoretical insight into the causes of oppression against which young people—or women, or students, etc.—otherwise would react “blindly—i.e., without direction or strategy. At the same time, revolutionaries learn from the very weaknesses of the youth movement, its strength.

There is not the space to analyse the changes in post-war economic and social life which have made this generational conflict so sharp, but I would like to point to some of its contradictions and argue for a certain response to it. The more politically conscious wing of the youth movement has gone through leftist and rightist phases in which it has questioned the validity of organisation at all, been held back by

Cold War residues, spontaneity, theoretical elitism, etc. It has also offered fresh perspectives and pertinent criticisms, particularly of the reproduction in revolutionary organisations of authoritarian and male-dominated structures.

Opening up Possibilities

In the cultural field the contradictions were most sharply felt, for here this new political trend came into contact with young workers, in the particular configuration known as “youth culture”. The extension of a market to young people in some ways levelled out sharp cultural distinctions between students and working youth. The same music, clothes and cultural habits could be shared. As a result of the post-war recovery, consumption patterns altered substantially with a multiplication of choices not only of commodities, but of activities and entertainments. Obviously, new markets were opened up which “benefited capital”, some effects of which have been detrimental to the working class, e.g. the trash market, or the “consumer consciousness” engendered in women by the availability of fashions and their receptiveness by training to them.

However, it is moralism rather than analysis to dismiss this expansion as a capitalist conspiracy and attempt to divert the class from its historical task. Precisely these developments opened up possibilities—for example, to multiply the availability of Marxist texts, or at a less profound but nevertheless valid level to escape the dull conformity in dress which the war and low wages had formerly imposed, to expand social and cultural experience. The revolution may be diverted if these activities were the only concern of the participants, but not if they take place in the context of a rejection of imposed frugality and mean subsistence, imposed values and authority. The youth movement has experimented with organisation, entertainment, forms of living, etc., which facilitate collective co-operation and culture, while at the same time suffering from capitalist commercialism and individualism.

Working Class Culture

By contrast, independent working class culture is held up as a goal, although it is itself a contradictory phenomenon which has been made into a myth of purity. The “culture” referred to has almost always concerned music alone. Pubs as a constituent of working class culture were prey in the 19th century to bourgeois control, and have always reinforced the cultural separation of sexes within the working class. Traditional folk music, while it displays an inspiring class militancy and solidarity, is also scarred, only too often by the belittling of women and the celebration of aspects of the class imposed on it by conditions of work—e.g. the idealisation of

the actual job while cursing the bosses.

Folk music is but one component of working class culture—albeit a potentially effective force in revolutionary struggle. But if the other components of proletarian culture are considered only as a bourgeois imposition, the working class is condemned as totally passive and unthinking. Alternatives to traditional folk music were made for the working class, e.g. music halls, but some were of their own making—such as skiffle bands and jazz. With a broader definition of working class culture, the different degrees of self-involvement and active creation, response to and acceptance of, what is presented, can be seen. It is composed not only of a variety of music which is made as well as listened to, but football, played as well as watched, active hobbies from painting to pigeon-racing, pubs where workers sing as well as play, juke boxes, bingo, dancing, television, newspapers, everyday expressions and humour. Taste is as much critically developed as created.

Working class men are not forced to go to football matches or watch television; they can cultivate side interests or participate themselves in sports and crafts. In his free time the worker is allowed room to choose. His income and hours of work dictate the range of possibilities, but his personal formation determines his choice within them. He is, in fact, free in the bourgeois sense, when outside the workplace. He is therefore free to take up a critical and thinking attitude to what he is offered. That active response is also an element in working class culture, and a potentially revolutionary one.

Content of Youth Culture

The content of youth culture is in the same way both independently created and imposed or mechanically reproduced, with the latter tendency in some senses dominant since 1968. But with sensitivity to its internal development and reflection on its own mistakes and weaknesses, the potential still present in much of the music and ideas, in its collective expression and political articulation, reveals itself. For example, the "Who", articulated the identity and rejection implicit in "youth culture" in their song "My Generation".¹ By the time they made "Won't be fooled again", political cynicism had crept in to compensate for former naïveté.²

But in their new album, "Quadraphenia", the ideological conflicts of "mods" is sadly and critically unravelled—hatred of being ordered about, trodden on, misled, deceived, with only the individualist

"solutions"—indifference or suicide.³ "Pink Floyd", in their L.P. "Dark Side of the Moon", depict the social fissures and darkness in which those defined as mentally ill are caught. The questions being asked are albeit primitive, muted and partial, but they are expressions of a rejection of bourgeois values, authority, and institutions. What they lack is revolutionary hope and direction, in place of a sense of individual impotence and despair. In a more developed form they promise a rejection of the whole structure of bourgeois social relations.

Most music, however, does not actually have the effect of revolutionising consciousness; it is more symptomatic of changing consciousness. The main theme of the music of "youth culture", which does not fall into the trash camp, is the celebration of the senses in dance and sexual rhythms. They may not be political, but our emotions, movements and the music which stimulates them should be appropriate to revolutionary activity and perception. In this sense, music seems comparable to sport, whose function in this society is highly ideological, encouraging competitiveness and individual prowess. But it can be co-operative and a test of strength against natural obstacles and limitations, and as such an activity which reflects and carries forward an active relation to the world. It may not be essential for making the revolution, but a new type of sport, based on different ethics, would be symptomatic of the new form of consciousness emerging in

² "The world looks just the same
History ain't changed,
From the banner they all bore
In the last war".

Chorus

"I take my hat off to the new constitution
I take a bow for the new revolution
I ain't dreamed at the change all around."

"Pick up my guitar and play
Just like yesterday
I get on my knees and pray
Won't get fooled again."

"There's nothing in the street
That's any different to me
The slogans are effaced by the times
But the parting on the left
Is now the parting on the right" etc.

Chorus

"Meet the new boss
Same as the old boss" etc.

³ "I've had enough of dance-halls,
I've had enough of pills,
I've had enough of street-fights,
I've seen my share of kills,
I've finished with the fashions
And acting like I'm tough,
I'm bored with hate and passion,
I've had enough of trying to love" etc.

¹ "People try to put me down
Talking about my generation,
But because I get around
Talking about my generation" etc.

the revolutionary process.

The formation of a revolutionary culture is a complex compound of self-created and critical elements, of directly political and broadly ideological components. Youth culture has components which, through the refracting eye of revolutionary criticism, can reveal new aspects of struggle and sharpen revolutionary insight. I would like to argue that the relation between "highbrow culture" and an independent revolutionary culture be treated in a similar way. If culture is defined (imprecisely) as a general reproduction of ideology, but each of whose forms develops with its own autonomy, and revolutionary ideology as arising out of the independent institutions of the class, it follows that revolutionary culture proper depends itself on autonomous cultural organisations of the movement. The Communist Party has a special role in creating conditions within it for the fruition of new values, ideas, intellectual and artistic activities. But the practical limitations on such independent cultural endeavours are obvious—time, resources, facilities, etc.

A task, however, remains of "placing" the forms of "high culture" of experiencing them and analysing what they do, how they function, what effects they have. Such a criticism of high culture, by "placing" it, precisely appropriates knowledge of it for the revolutionary movement. So the Cubist movement reconstituted the concept of time and space which had prevailed in painting since the Renaissance, as a cultural form of bourgeois subjectivity, and by breaking through it, could place the Western oil-painting tradition in its theoretical and historical context. Cubism itself paved the way for the rich and experimental art of the early Russian Revolution which rethought the distinctions between art, technology, architecture and science.

Such practice can enrich the class struggle in all its aspects, and lay the base for a new culture under socialism in which many currents will converge and many forms be found outmoded. In this process the critical involvement and analysis of Communists is required, with neither heavy hands nor theoretical lopsidedness.

EDITORIAL COMMENTS (concluded)

ideas is under profound challenge. The whole of education becomes an arena of struggle.

There is growing struggle today, not just for democracy in the selection of the students in higher education, not just in the organisation of education, not just in the method of teaching, but also in its *content*.

It is a complex struggle. There is the direct critique of every aspect of bourgeois ideology and of the way in which it is embodied in the course of education. There is the development and deepening of the Marxist approach in every discipline. There is the fight for a better *content* and *method* of teaching *now*, still under capitalism, in our Colleges and Universities. It is a struggle in which not only do Marxists make their direct challenge, not only do they try to strengthen a broader democratic struggle on the issue of content, but in which discussion, polemic, passionate debate and argument is needed *amongst Marxists* seeking to clarify their attitudes.

COMMUNIST STUDENT PAMPHLET

The six Communist Universities held to date have made a big contribution. The seventh will be held next July.

We recommend our readers in this connection, to read the pamphlet, recently published by the National Student Committee of the

Communist Party—*Breaking the Barriers: Ideology and Post-School Education*².

The editor, Judy Bloomfield, with a dozen or so contributors who joined in the work, make their position clear:—

"This pamphlet is only a beginning, along with other discussions which have taken place at the Communist University and elsewhere, of an analysis of, and alternative to bourgeois education. It aims to stimulate debate and interest in these questions and the pamphlet's success will be gauged by the extent to which this is achieved. . . . The contributors were by no means certain where they trod, nor agreed on all matters. However, rather than fear to tread on rather unfamiliar and unexplored territory we have taken the plunge!"

The areas treated are economics, history, science and technology, philosophy, psychology, education, literature, sociology, architectural education, law and legal education, fine art.

While the contents of the pamphlet are inevitably controversial, we must thank the authors and the National Student Committee for boldly entering complex territory, and provoking further study and discussion in a general field which is of the utmost importance for the Communist Party and the whole working class movement.

² *Breaking the Barrier: Ideology and Post-School Education*, Communist Student Pamphlet, 15p.

*New Books from the USSR
in the English Language*

RUSSIAN COOKING

Here is a cookery book covering all kinds of food—soups, fish, meat, vegetables, puddings and pies, and drinks too.
195 pages (16 in colour) £1

**ALEXANDER PUSHKIN—SELECTED
WORKS IN TWO VOLUMES**

Volume 1. Poetry. 208 pages, and contains
The Soul of our People, Lyric poems and
narrative poems.

Volume 2. PROSE works. 234 pages and
includes The Queen of Spades and The
Captain's Daughter.

Cloth Illustrated £2 the set
(sold in sets only)

**IVAN TURGENEV: FATHERS AND SONS
and A NEST OF THE GENTRY**

388 pages Cloth £1

THE OCTOBER STORM AND AFTER

A volume of stories and reminiscences about
the years of underground revolutionary work,
the era of the Civil war and the revolution-
ary activity of the Soviet people building
a new society. The authors include Luna-
charsky, John Reed, Sholokhov, Gorky and
Fedin.

354 pages Cloth £1.25

**CONTEMPORARY LEGAL THOUGHT
by V. A. Tumanov**

Analyses the main trends in the modern
theory and philosophy of law in the West,
and expounds many of the vital theses of
Marxist theory concerning the essence of
law.

311 pages Cloth £1

**WEST BERLIN
by V. Vysotsky**

The author outlines the history of West
Berlin and analyses the inter-relationship of
the historical, political legal, financial and
economic aspects of the problems associated
with the city.

355 pages Cloth £1

Available from:

CENTRAL BOOKS LTD.

37 GRAYS INN ROAD,
LONDON WC1X 8PS

Please add 10 per cent for postage when
ordering.

**WORLD MARXIST
REVIEW: 1975
No. 1**

**SOCIALISM'S ROLE IN THE PRESENT-
DAY WORLD**

by B. Ponomaryov

**PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY: A FORM OF
TRANSITION TO SOCIALISM**

by D. Nemes

THE GUIDING FORCE

by K. Ivanov

Price: 15p per issue plus postage
£1.80 for one year
from

CENTRAL BOOKS LIMITED

37 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8PS

**CRITICA
MARXISTA**

No. 5: September-October 1974

Gianni Giadresco

*Il partito repubblicano e il fallimento del
centro-sinistra.*

Gianfranco la Grassa

Sul problema del lavoro "astratto".

Franca Papa

Questioni di teoria per il comunismo.

Carmine Finamore

Sartre tra marxismo e fenomenologia.

Price for countries outside Italy:

L.2,000 per copy.

Subscription: L10,000 per annum.

Critica Marxista:

Via Botteghe Oscure 4, 00186 Rome.

MARX and ENGELS

**COLLECTED
WORKS**

**VOLUME ONE:
MARX
1835-1843**

The earliest writings of Marx, including his schoolboy letters and essays, the Doctoral Dissertation on early Greek Philosophy with his accompanying post-graduate notebooks, poems and journalistic writings. These are of immense interest in their own right and as indicative of the first stages of Marx's intellectual and political development.

£3

BRECHT

as they knew him

**Hans Eisler, Walter
Benjamin and others**

One of the most revealing books on Berthold Brecht—a collection of studies by his East German contemporaries appreciating his character, and assessing his contribution to the contemporary theatre.

paperback £1



LAWRENCE & WISHART
46 BEDFORD ROW
LONDON WC1B 4LR

Collet's

LONDON BOOKSHOP
64-66 Charing Cross Road,
London WC2H 0BD
Tel.: 01-836 6306

**KARL MARX, FREDERICK ENGELS
COLLECTED WORKS**

Vol. 1 Marx: 1835-1843

£3.00 plus 30p p.&p.

THE OCTOBER STORM AND AFTER
**Stories and Reminiscences of the
Bolshevik Revolution**

£1.25 plus 23p p.&p.

INSIDE THE COMPANY; CIA DIARY
by Philip Agee. Paper edn.

95p plus 17p p.&p.

**ALEXANDER PUSHKIN: SELECTED
WORKS**

In two volumes, prose works and poetry

£2.00 plus 23p p.&p.
for two vols.

KARL MARX: A Biography
by P. N. Fedoseyev et al

£2.00 plus 30p p.&p.

POLITICS IN ZAMBIA
Ed. William Tordoff

£6.00 plus 23p p.&p.

**SOVIET POLITICS AND SOCIETY IN
THE 1970s**
Ed. Henry W. Morton & Rudolf I. Tokes

£6.50 plus 30p p.&p.

FOR OUR SECOND-HAND DEPARTMENT

*We pay the highest prices for left-wing
collections.*